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ON

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

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ESSAY

ON

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

BY

BAPTIST W. NOEL, M.A.

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"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."—*Mark*, xvi. 16.

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."—*Acts*, ii. 38.

LONDON:
JAMES NISBET AND CO., 21 BERNERS STREET.
1849.

63336

LONDON:
Printed by G. Barclay, Castle St. Leicester Sq.

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PREFACE.

During my ministry in the Establishment, an indefinite fear of the conclusions at which I might arrive led me to avoid the study of the question of baptism; but I felt obliged to examine honestly each passage of scripture upon the subject which came in my way, and the evidence thus obtained convinced me that repentance and faith ought to precede baptism. The reasons assigned by the Anglican Catechism why an infant should be baptized without repentance and faith are very unsatisfactory. As soon, then, as I had settled my mind upon the union of the churches with the State, I turned my at-

tention to this question. Aware how many are disposed to attribute any opinion which contradicts their own to such a partial, one-sided investigation as they practise themselves, I determined to form my judgment entirely by the study of the scriptures, and of such authors as advocate the baptism of infants. To that determination I have adhered. And not having read a single baptist book or tract, I publish the following work as an independent testimony to the exclusive right of believers to Christian baptism. Undoubtedly I might have enriched its pages by an examination of the able and excellent authors who have written on the same side; and by the use of their reasonings and researches might have escaped some of the errors of detail into which it is possible that, in the discussion of a question so extensive and so complicated, I may have fallen: but then I

should have lessened its value as an independent testimony. Several of the works with which I have the misfortune to differ are written with ability and with calmness, especially those of Wardlaw and Leonard Woods, of Halley and Godwin. Nothing can be better than the spirit which pervades the volumes of Budd and Bickersteth: if I dissent from their conclusions, I gladly express my conviction of their honesty; and, while contending against one of the opinions of pious pædo-baptists, I earnestly hope that nothing may ever diminish the cordiality with which we may act together in promoting the cause of the Redeemer.

I assume in the following essay that the word baptism means immersion, and that to baptize is to immerse; the evidence of which fact I hope to adduce in a separate volume.

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INTRODUCTION.

After our Lord's resurrection from the dead, and shortly before his ascension to heaven, he addressed to his Apostles these solemn words: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo I am with you alway, even to the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 18–20. In an examination of the nature of Christian baptism this passage merits the earliest and most attentive consideration; because it both records the institution of baptism and declares its perpetuity. To understand what baptism is we must first examine carefully the terms of the law which renders it obligatory. After we have examined the law itself, we may then consider the various comments which inspired writers have pronounced upon it; and

gather whatever light we may be able from the practice of baptism, both before this enactment and after it: but our first duty is to examine the terms of the law itself.

It has been said, indeed, that Christian baptism was instituted before, because it is recorded that "Jesus made and baptized disciples," John, iv. 1; iii. 26. But this incidental mention of the fact of baptism having been administered by the first disciples cannot amount to a perpetual law in the churches. Four disciples only are mentioned as having followed Christ: Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathaniel, John, i. 40–43. Even these had not received their call to leave their nets and follow him, Matt. iv. 18. And it was with reference to a time later than this that Luke records, "When it was day he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named Apostles," Luke, vi. 13. So that these disciples baptized before they were ministers of Christ, and when they were yet very imperfectly acquainted with the Gospel. When Jesus began to preach, his instruction exactly resembled that of John: "Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," Matt. iv. 17. And it is probable that when his disciples baptized, they did not baptize unto the name of Jesus, as John did not baptize unto his own name; but that, like John, they baptized in token of the repentance of the converts as persons expecting the kingdom of heaven to be shortly set up. The idea that they were baptized by the command of

Jesus, as professing their faith in him as Christ, is very improbable. For many were baptized, John, iii. 26; iv. 1. If Jesus had commanded them all openly to confess that he was Christ, how could he charge his Apostles to conceal the fact that he was Christ? How can we understand the following passage, "When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. . . . . Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ," Matt. xvi. 13-16, 20. Either the Apostles had wholly ceased to baptize, or those who were baptized did not profess their faith in Jesus as the Christ. Moreover, as the Pharisees knew that many had been baptized (John, iv. 1), and assuredly learned the circumstances of those baptisms, if all the converts had by the order of Jesus declared their faith in him as Christ, how could the Jews come round about him in the temple and say, "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly," John, x. 24. The profession of the converts by order of Jesus would have been certain and overwhelming evidence that he claimed to be Christ, nor could they either then or afterwards have been in want of any proof of that

fact. See Matt. xxvi. 63–65; Luke, xxii. 66–71. There were, doubtless, proofs enough afforded that he was Christ by the song of the angels, the visit of the Magi, the testimony of John, the miracles which he wrought; but the question is, whether he so openly and so constantly declared himself to be Christ that all men knew his claims; and if he did not then, whether the baptism of his disciples could involve a profession of their faith in him as Christ. To me it appears clear that they made no such profession; and that the baptism then administered by his disciples was simply, like that of John, a baptism of repentance, because the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Let us further notice that there is no statement whatever that the twelve Apostles, subsequently to their appointment, ever baptized a single convert till after the ascension of Christ. If they did so, still there is no statement that this was by express command of our Lord, nor that it was meant to be a perpetual law in his Church; and even if this also be assumed without proofs, still it remains certain, as I think, that their baptism was essentially different from the baptism enjoined by Christ before his ascension, because it was not baptism unto the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. This it could not be. Even the Apostles of Christ, though his chosen companions, and daily taught by his own lips, remained very ignorant of spiritual truths till the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. He often reproved them for their unbelief, Matt. xvi. 6–12; xvii. 20; Mark, xvi. 14; Luke,

xxiv. 21–25. When he told them that he should be crucified they could not comprehend it, Matt. xvi. 21–23; Luke, ix. 45; John, xvi. 17, 18; and many truths, which they were to learn afterward, did Jesus abstain from teaching them during his ministry on earth, because they were not prepared to receive them, John, xvi. 12. Under these circumstances it cannot be supposed that these Apostles, still so ignorant and so unbelieving, everywhere consecrated men to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, associating with the Deity the Lord Jesus Christ, as one with him in nature and glory, and the Holy Spirit, who had not yet been poured out, because Christ was not yet glorified, John, vii. 39. I am unable, therefore, to believe that Christian baptism was instituted before the resurrection of Jesus Christ; and am compelled to examine his commission as containing "the great law of Christian baptism," and "the chief authority for the continued practice of baptism in the Christian Church."—*Halley*, 490, 493.

II. Next, it is necessary to settle another preliminary question; *i. e.* whether the baptism spoken of in Matt. xxviii. 19, refer to the body or to the mind. Did our Lord command his ministers to baptize in water or in the Spirit? The following considerations may enable us to determine that the general opinion, which refers the word to material, and not to spiritual, baptism, is correct.

1. When men are brought to believe in Christ, it is necessary that they should profess their faith in

him openly, Matt. x. 32, 33; Rom. x. 9, 10; Rev. xxi. 8. Baptism unto the name of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, is such a profession, which is therefore necessary to the Church, and as such is here commanded. The objection that the baptism of the Spirit, as being more important than water baptism, must be here understood, has the less force when we consider that the spiritual baptism is involved in the discipleship which is previously mentioned. All believers are baptized in the Spirit at the time of their conversion to God, John, i. 12, 13; iii. 5; and, therefore, when our Lord commanded his Apostles to go and make disciples, he in effect commanded them to seek for them by prayer and preaching the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the next duty was to lead them to confess Christ by baptism in water. To object that baptism here cannot mean water baptism, because the baptism of the Spirit is more important, is no more sound than to affirm that when our Lord said to his disciples, "Take, eat" (Matt. xxvi. 26), he could not mean the sacramental bread, because it is so much more important to eat his flesh spiritually by faith, John, vi. 53-55. Assuredly the baptism of the Spirit is more important, but the baptism of water is not therefore unnecessary; and unless we are prepared to discard the Lord's Supper as unworthy of Christ, we must maintain the rite of baptism to be worthy of him. If symbolic acts are unsuitable to our spiritual religion, we should not eat the Lord's Supper; if, on the contrary, they are suitable to it

in any case, no symbolic act can be more simple or more expressive than immersion.

This rite was indeed practised by the Apostles from the beginning, Acts, ii. 38. But on what was their practice founded? They certainly did not introduce will-worship into the churches: they enacted nothing which was without Christ's authority. Now whence did they derive this baptism of the converts? The baptisms mentioned in John, iii. and iv. were not unto the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, nor even unto the name of Jesus as the Christ; nor did they afford any proof that Jesus meant them to be universal in his churches, if, indeed, they continued beyond the first months of his ministry. Now if these baptisms, incidentally mentioned and not expressly commanded, amount not to a law in the Christian Church, then there is no other law of baptism than that contained in Matt. xxviii. and in Mark, xvi. If these statements do not contain an injunction to baptize, then there is no command directing the ministers of Christ to baptize; there is no initiatory rite in the Christian religion; there is no appointed mode by which a man shall at his conversion individually confess Christ:—a thing very difficult to credit.

It has been argued, that a law meant to be universally binding on the Church of Christ would have been expressly recorded by all the Evangelists, whereas Matthew alone has recorded it. But, indeed, Mark has recorded a similar declaration of our Lord,

which involves it, Mark, xvi. 15, 16. It is no more surprising that John has omitted to record the institution of baptism than that he has omitted to notice the institution of the Lord's Supper; and if John might omit it, why might not Luke? If it may be argued that this is no command to baptize in water because Luke and John have not recorded it, we may argue that he has not promised to be with his disciples to the end of the world, because these two Evangelists are silent respecting it; and deny that he has given any promise of the Spirit to his Church, because that promise is not noticed by the Evangelists Matthew and Mark. See Luke, xxiv. 49; John, xx. 22.

When Paul declared that he was not sent to baptize (1 Cor. i. 17), he referred to the words of his special commission, recorded Acts, xxvi. 17, and the reason why he rejoiced to have baptized but few Corinthians, was that they could not suppose him to have wished to form a Pauline party of those baptized by his own hands (1 Cor. i. 15). But in no respect did his general practice differ from that of the other Apostles; like him they were chiefly sent to preach the gospel (Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark, xvi. 15); and like them he baptized the converts. In various churches he may have left them to be baptized by his companions, as at Corinth; but they were all baptized with his sanction. The converts were baptized at Philippi (Acts, xvi. 15, 33), at Corinth (Acts, xviii. 8; 1 Cor. i. 13; xv. 29), at Ephesus (Acts, xix. 5; Eph. iv. 5), at Colosse (Col.

ii. 12), and throughout Asia Minor (1 Pet. iii. 21); the disciples were also baptized at Rome (Rom. vi. 3): and since there is no reason to suppose that the discipline of these churches differed from that of the other apostolic churches, we may infer that all the converts in those churches were similarly baptized. From the days of the Apostles all the churches, without exception, received baptism without any other commands than these; in the earliest Christian writings these passages are appealed to as the law upon the subject. No one in the first ages ever objected to this interpretation on the ground that a spiritual baptism was intended; and all, without exception, accepted water baptism as a divine ordinance. Since, then, an open confession of Christ at the beginning of the Christian life is important, since the mode of confessing him by immersion is simple and significant, since there is no other command of Christ enjoining baptism, since the Apostles everywhere baptized their converts in water, and since all the churches of Christ received the practice from them, we have reason to think that the command in Matt. xxviii. referred to water baptism, and not to baptism of the Spirit.

2. It is important to consider in what sense the command would naturally be understood by the Apostles, because our Lord would not so speak as to mislead those whom he was instructing. It is evident from the manner in which baptism is mentioned in the New Testament, that the writers were familiar with the term and with its meaning. On this occa-

sion, apparently, the Apostles asked no explanation of the command, and the Evangelist offers none to his readers. The meaning was, it seems, plain to every one. What, then, was that meaning? Baptism in water had been practised by the Jews, by John, and by the apostles of John. We read, "Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan," Matt. iii. 5, 6. Thousands, therefore, had been baptized by him, and his baptism was the topic of universal conversation, Luke, iii. 15; John, i. 25. Shortly after the disciples of Jesus began to baptize, and numbers received the rite from their hands, John, iii. 22–26; iv. 1, 2. When any conversation arose among the disciples respecting baptism among the Jews, the word always meant baptism in water; if they used the word with reference to the ministry of John, it meant baptism in water; or if they spoke of it with reference to the followers of Christ, it still recalled the fact that they had been baptized in water. Every one was familiar with the baptismal rite, every one talked of it; it admitted proselytes into communion with the Jews; it admitted converts into the company of John's disciples; it was administered to the disciples of Jesus. When, therefore, Jesus said to his Apostles, "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them. . . . Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. . . . He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved,"—they must have understood him to speak of baptism in water.

It is true that John had spoken of a superior baptism when he said to the multitudes of Jesus, "He shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost," Matt. iii. 11. And Jesus himself had renewed the promise to his disciples in these words: "Ye shall be baptized in the Holy Ghost not many days hence," Acts, i. 5; but the disciples could not understand our Lord to mean in the terms of the commission this spiritual baptism; because this was a new thing understood by few (John, iii. 1–9), talked of by few (John, xiv. 17), and which certainly had not yet superseded, as indeed it never afterwards did, the common meaning of the term. Not one Jew in twenty who used the word baptism would mean the baptism of the Spirit; not one in a thousand would think of spiritual baptism when he heard the simple word employed; and therefore no one would employ it in that sense; and when the Apostles received the command simply to baptize, they must have understood it as all other Jews would of baptism in water.

Had any question arisen for a moment as to the meaning of the term, it would, as I think, have been speedily settled in their minds, by their noticing in what manner both John and Jesus spoke of the spiritual baptism. They had heard John say of Jesus, "He shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost;" and they had heard Jesus say, "Ye shall be baptized in the Holy Ghost;" but they had never heard either John or Jesus say, "Ye shall baptize others in the Holy Ghost." On the contrary, though John was a great prophet, who "turned many of the

children of Israel to the Lord their God" (Luke, i. 16), yet he expressly disclaimed this power of baptizing in the Spirit, which was to be the prerogative of Jesus alone: "I indeed baptize you in water unto repentance, but he shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost," Matt. iii. 11. Hitherto, when John had commanded his disciples to baptize, he meant them to baptize in water; when Jesus had commanded his disciples to baptize, he meant them to baptize in water: and now that, without any special promise of higher power, he again commanded them to baptize, how could they understand him to mean something totally new, or suppose him incidentally, and without any explanation, to confer a power withheld even from John the Baptist? But as Jesus knew that the disciples must understand him to mean that they should baptize in water, he certainly did mean it.

3. We have also satisfactory, positive evidence, that our Lord here commanded his disciples to baptize in water.

Like John, the ministers of Christ to the end of time are sent forth to turn many to God (Luke, i. 16); but, like him, they are unable to baptize in the Holy Ghost, Matt. iii. 11. This baptism in the Spirit, which is the regeneration of the soul, is exclusively the work of God. Men may be employed by him to preach, but the work of regenerating a spirit, of giving life to a dead soul, the work of the new creation, is always ascribed to God and to Christ—never to ministers. See Acts, ii. 33, 47; John, i. 13; Tit. iii. 5; James, i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 3;

1 John, iii. 9; 1 Cor. iii. 5, 9; 2 Cor. v. 17; Eph. ii. 1–5, 11, &c. &c. The ministers of Christ, therefore, are here not called to do what is exclusively the work of God, to baptize in the Spirit; but, as their appropriate work, to lead those whom God has baptized in his Spirit to profess their change of mind by baptism in water. Nowhere can baptism, when it stands alone, be shown to refer to spiritual baptism. But both the word and the phrase which are here employed are employed of the baptism in water.

First, let us observe the New Testament use of the word baptism.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you," Acts, ii. 38.

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized," Acts, ii. 41.

"When they believed Philip, . . . they were baptized. . . . Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip," Acts, viii. 12, 13.

"Many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized," Acts, xviii. 8.

"He said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," Acts, xix. 3–5.

"I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanus: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel," 1 Cor. i. 14–17.

Without comment on these passages, we can at once see that in them all baptism alone, without any mention of water, means baptism in water, and not baptism in the Spirit.

Next, let us notice the New Testament use of the phrase, "baptism unto the name of God." I should not omit, in passing, to recall the phrase in the prophecy of Jeremiah, "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord" (Jer. iv. 4), because "circumcision to the Lord" is similar to "baptism to the Lord," both external acts betokening the same duty of sanctification and dedication to God. Several times are similar phrases used in the New Testament, of which the following are instances:—

"They were all *baptized unto Moses* in the cloud and in the sea," 1 Cor. x. 2. They were marked to be the disciples of Moses, by following him into the Red Sea, where they were buried for a while within the cloud and sea which surrounded them.

"Were ye baptized unto the name of Paul," εἰς τὸ ὄνομα Παύλου (1 Cor. i. 13), were you dedicated by your baptism in water to be disciples of Paul?

"Only they were baptized εἰς τὸ ὄνομα, unto the name of the Lord Jesus," Acts, viii. 16.

"When they heard this they were baptized εἰς τὸ ὄνομα, unto the name of the Lord Jesus," Acts, xix. 5.

As in all these places the phrases, "to be baptized into the name" of any one means to be dedicated by water baptism to the service of any one, the similar phrase in the commission to the Apostles must mean the same thing; and when Jesus said, "Baptize them unto the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," he meant, Dedicate them by water baptism to the service of the Triune God.

As all the direct evidence is in favour of interpreting the word baptism when it stands alone in the New Testament to mean water baptism, and as "antecedent probabilities," if there be any, "are of very small value, if opposed by direct evidence," "scarcely deserving to be taken into account," (*Godwin*, 143), we may unhesitatingly conclude that the commission to the ministers of Christ to baptize is a command to them to baptize in water.

On the whole, as it seems to me, we have abundant reason to conclude that the command in the commission to the ministers of Christ to baptize is to baptize in water; and that it is the will of Christ that disciples or believers in him should be baptized in water in all successive generations.

On the same grounds, all the other passages of the New Testament in which baptism is mentioned alone must, unless special reasons can be adduced for the contrary, be understood to mean baptism in water. In Rom. vi. 3, and Gal. iii. 27, believers are said "to

be baptized unto Christ;" and in Col. ii. 12, "to be buried with him in baptism." Eph. iv. 5, reminds us that among Christians there is "one baptism;" and the Apostle Peter declares (1 Peter, iii. 21), "Baptism doth save us:" all which passages, for the reasons above assigned, must be understood to mean baptism in water.

III. Further, this command to baptize, or to immerse in water, must be understood to be of perpetual authority, and to bind the ministers of Christ to baptize his disciples to the end of time, for the following reasons among others:

1. As our Lord has here commanded his disciples to disciple and to baptize the nations, with the assurance that while they are accomplishing this mission he will be with them ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος, "to the end of the world," it follows that they must continue to baptize until the end of the world.[1]

2. As the dispensation of the Spirit began at Pentecost, and the kingdom of Christ began then to

[1] "Αἰών, an age, a long space of time, a period. Ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος, this present world."—*Liddell.* "Αἰών, the present world."—*Robinson.* "Mundus orbis terrarum in N. T. ὁ αἰὼν dicitur."—*Schleusner.* The word is used to express the present world: Matt. xii. 32; xiii. 22, 39; Mark, x. 30; Luke, i. 70; xvi. 8; xviii. 30; xx. 34, 35; Acts, xv. 18; Eph. i. 21. "Hence," says Schleusner, "it appears that 'this world' does not ever signify in the N. T. the times of the O. T., nor the 'world to come,' the times of the Messiah." See Heb. i. 2; xi. 3.

"Συντελεία, accomplishment."—*Liddell.* "Full end, consummation."—*Robinson.* Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49; from συντελέω, "to accomplish," "to end," used, Matt. vii. 28; Luke, iv. 13; Acts, xxi. 27.

e established, whatever was then practised generally y the Apostles in the churches became a law of the ingdom of Christ, which was not meant to pass way like the Mosaic ceremonial, but to last; and ince the Apostles administered baptism to their con- erts, it must still be administered to the same class f persons. No reason can be assigned for the dis- ontinuance of baptism now, which was not equally alid at the period wherein the Apostles were bap- zing.

3. Baptism being the appointed method by which ie first converts professed their faith in Christ, is as uitable to our times as to theirs. As Judaism had s initiatory rite, so is it useful that Christianity ould have its initiatory rite likewise. A profes- on of faith is necessary at the beginning of a hristian life, and no act of profession can be more olemn or expressive than this.

4. The terms in which baptism is spoken of in ie New Testament are such as to forbid the notion iat it was intended for a limited period alone at the ommencement of the Christian era. Our Lord's olemn words are, "*He that believeth and is baptized hall be saved,*" Mark, xvi. 16. To the Jewish mul- tude the Apostle Peter said, "*Repent, and be bap- zed every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for ie remission of sins,*" Acts, ii. 38. By baptism elievers are said to be "*buried with Christ,*" and to *rise with him*" (Rom. vi. 3; Col. ii. 12); and bap- sm is said to "*save us*" (1 Pet. iii. 21). An ordin-

ance which had such consequences was not meant to be discontinued in the churches.

5. The uses of baptism remain the same in every age; whatever advantages believers and churches obtained from it in the apostolic age, they can obtain now; and if it was necessary then, it must be no less necessary now.

6. Our Lord has directed his disciples to "*disciple* ALL NATIONS, *baptizing them*,"[1] and since the nations generally are not yet either converted or baptized the command remains to be accomplished.

These commands of Christ, therefore, are now in force just as when they were first given to the Apostles: and we have to consider what the duties are which they enjoin.

[1] "All nations," Πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, all the nations of the world. See Matt. xii. 18, 21; xxv. 32; Luke, xxi. 24; Acts, ii. 5; xi. 16; xvii. 26; Rom. iv. 17, 13; Rev. xi. 9; xii. 5, &c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

THE MEANING OF THE COMMISSION GIVEN TO THE APOSTLES.

HAVING now ascertained that Christ has commanded his ministers to immerse disciples, and has ommanded his disciples to be immersed, let us further examine the meaning of this command as deeloped by the commission itself.

Before our Lord ascended to his glory, he said to is Apostles, "*Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing hem in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and f the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all hings whatsoever I have commanded you.*"

The word μαθητεύειν, here translated "to teach," is ometimes used in that sense, as Matt. xiii. 52; but ere it means apparently "to make a disciple" *Liddell*), "to train or teach as a disciple" (*Robinon*), "to draw any one to the Christian religion" *Schleusner*), as Acts, xiv. 21. Three acts are herefore enjoined,—to disciple the nations, to bapze them, and to teach them obedience to all hrist's laws.

Now there are three ways in which these words may be understood, supposing the meaning of the separate terms to be ascertained. First, We may understand that the second and third commands are explanatory of the first. "Baptizing the nations and teaching them to obey my commands, make disciples of them:" in other words, "Make disciples of the nations by baptizing them and by teaching them obedience." According to this construction of the sentence some maintain that persons are to be baptized, not after they are become disciples but in order to their becoming so; they are not to be made disciples that they may be baptized and taught, but to be baptized and taught that they may thus be made disciples. All serious applicants, they think, ought to be baptized at once, and then instructed that they may become disciples: the nations are to be baptized and then taught, there being no other limit to the duty than the practicability.

There are serious objections to this interpretation.

1. Without previous knowledge of Christ and faith in Christ, the nations would not be baptized; and to command the disciples to baptize the nations before they were converted was to command what was impracticable. How, for instance, would the missionaries now on the coast of China be able to baptize the people of Canton, Amoy, or Shanghae before leading them to believe in Christ? By baptism a Hindoo renounces caste, connexions, property; will he do this before he understands and believes the Gospel?

2. If baptism precedes discipleship, so does the instruction in all the details of obedience; for the second and third commands being both participles present must be synchronical; and if the one must precede discipleship so must the other. Hence no man can be a disciple till he is instructed in all the details of obedience as well as baptized, which is contrary to the common use of language, and contrary to fact.

3. According to this interpretation, men are to be taught to obey all the commands of Christ before they become his disciples, which is impossible; for till men become disciples of Christ they will not listen to his commands.

4. The most serious objection to this interpretation is, that no man is made a disciple by being baptized and being taught the details of obedience, but by hearing and receiving the doctrine of Christ.

5. In various places in the New Testament discipleship is stated to be different from baptism, and to precede it. Thus, in John, iv., we read, "When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, he left Judea." Jesus therefore made disciples, and then baptized them. The baptism was different from the discipleship, and succeeded it.

6. This interpretation is refuted by the practice of the Apostles, who led men to believe the gospel before they baptized them.

But there are not wanting passages in the New Testament which show that these three commands

may mean, "Make disciples of the nations by leading them to believe in me, then baptize them as disciples, and then teach them as baptized disciples to obey all my commands."

Present participles thus, sometimes, in the New Testament, express actions which immediately follow the action of the verb with which they are connected, and are accessories to it. Thus (Matt. viii. 27), "The men marvelled, saying," &c. When the wonder preceded the language and caused it (Matt. ix. 33), "The multitudes marvelled, saying," &c. See, also, Matt. xix. 25; xxi. 10, 20; xxvi. 8, &c. In all these cases the emotion described preceded the words. So, when Jesus said, "Go ye and disciple the nations, baptizing them," the discipleship might precede the baptism, and be its cause. Present participles are connected in a similar manner with words of approaching, as (Matt. xvii. 14), "There came to him a man, kneeling down to him," Matt. xix. 3, "The Pharisees came to him tempting him." In the one case the man came before he knelt, and in the second the Pharisees came before they tempted. So when it was said to the Apostles, "Disciple baptizing," they might disciple before they baptized. In these and similar instances we may observe, too, that the verb and the participle may refer to different acts, and that the participle may describe something additional to the principal action; as, for instance (Luke, vi. 36), "Lend hoping for nothing again;" again, "Lend, and when ye lend hope for no return." So here the command

s, "Make disciples, and as you make disciples bap-ize them." There are some instances in which, if I nistake not, three consecutive actions are expressed precisely as the three acts are in the commission. Thus (Eph. v. 18–20), 1. "Be filled with the Spi-it;" 2. "speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things;" 3. "submitting yourselves one to another."[1] As here the perpetual thanks-giving and the submission to each other are consequences of being filled with the Spirit, so in the commission baptism and instruction are to be consequences of discipleship.

Eph. vi. 17, 18. 1. "Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;" 2. "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit," 3. "and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."[1] The soldier takes his armour first in a time of danger, and then watches; the Christian is called to assume Christian tempers and the word of God as his armour, and then to pray and to watch. Just so, according to the commission, the sinner is called to become a disciple first, and then to profess discipleship in baptism, and to receive instruction in the details of a Christian life. The construction of

[1] Πληροῦσθε ἐν Πνεύματι, λαλοῦντες ἑαυτοῖς, ᾄδοντες καὶ ψάλλοντες, εὐχαριστοῦντες, ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις, &c.

[2] Τὴν περικεφαλαίαν δέξασθε, προσευχόμενοι ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ, καὶ ἀγρυπνοῦντες ἐν πάσῃ προσκαρτερήσει.

the two sentences is exactly similar, and so is the order of the actions. In Eph. vi. the two present participles following the verb express two actions immediately following the action of the verb, and this is exactly the case with the present participles which follow the verb in Matt. xxviii.

Col. iii. 16. 1. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly;" 2. "teaching and admonishing one another," 3. "in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."[1] They were first to store their minds with scripture, and then teach one another, and sing praise. The two present participles following the verb express actions immediately following the action of the verb; and in Matt. xxviii. a similar construction expresses the same order of ideas.

But although according to New Testament usage the two participles express, as I think, actions subsequent to the action of the principal verb, those who will not admit this construction are not reduced to the necessity of interpreting the commission to mean, "Make disciples by baptizing and by teaching to obey." The construction of the sentence may illustrate the following rule:—"Every action which admits of being considered as only accompanying another, which is the main action, and may thus be represented as an accessory circumstance of another, the Greeks are fond of expressing by the participle,

[1] Ὁ λόγος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐνοικείτω ἐν ὑμῖν, διδάσκοντες ἑαυτοὺς, ψαλμοῖς ᾄδοντες.

nd even when two finite verbs are joined by 'and,' ne of them is generally put in the participle and ne copula is omitted. . . . . Several participles fre- uently stand in one proposition without a connexion, here the conjunctive particle would represent these erbs as three separate actions."—*Matthiæ, Par- ciple.* Here, therefore, when our Lord said, "Dis- ple all the nations, baptizing them, teaching them o obey," it is the same as if he had said, "Disciple, nd baptize, and teach;" the three actions are con- emporaneous. With respect to each individual, ne actions are consecutive. Each minister disci- les or converts the individual first, then baptizes, nd then teaches the details of Christian character nd conduct; but, comprehensively considered, these ctions are contemporaneous, since of the whole body f the ministers of Christ, to whom the commission given, some are preaching the gospel, some bap- zing, and some teaching the details of Christian uty at the same time, through all successive gene- ations. So it is said (Matt. ix. 35), 1. "Jesus went bout all the cities," 2. "teaching in their synagogues, nd preaching the gospel of the kingdom," 3. "and ealing every sickness." In each place the preaching nd the healing necessarily followed the arrival; but he three habits of travelling, teaching, and healing, ere, with respect to the whole tour, concurrent.

If, further, we seek to determine the order of the tions in the text which we are examining by the uthority of distinguished men, we shall find that e commentators the most remarkable both for

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scholarship and for their acquaintance with the bible, by common consent understand our Lord to declare that discipleship must precede baptism, not baptism discipleship; that our Lord has ordered his ministers to disciple in order to baptize, not to baptize in order to disciple; to baptize after conversion, not in order to convert.

"Christ orders those to be baptized who shall have given their name to the gospel, and shall have professed themselves disciples: partly that baptism may be to them the watchword of eternal life before God, partly the external sign of faith amongst men. Therefore, in Mark it is said, 'He that believeth and is baptized.' By which words Christ joins baptism to doctrine, so that the former may be merely an accession to the latter. But since Christ orders to teach before baptizing, and wills that believers alone be admitted to baptism, baptism seems not to be rightly administered unless faith has preceded. And properly is faith in the word placed before baptism, since the Gentiles were wholly alienated from God, nor had anything in common with the elect people; otherwise the figure would be mendacious, offering remission of sins and the gift of the Spirit to unbelievers who were not as yet members of Christ."—*Calvin.*[1]

[1] "Baptizari jubet Christus, qui nomen evangelio dederint, seque professi fuerint discipulos: partim ut illis baptismus vitæ eternæ sit tessera coram Deo, partim apud homines externum fidei signum. Ideoque apud Marcum dicitur, *Qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit*, quibus verbis . . . Christus . . . doctrinæ baptismum copu

"*Go ye therefore and teach all nations.* To gather together my subjects and believers . . . . which is done by the preaching of the Gospel. . . . *Baptizing them* for a sacrament of my grace to them in remission of sins, and likewise for a token that they are bound on their side to consecrate themselves to me."—*Diodati.*[1]

"*Teach all nations.* Teach all the nations the Christian doctrine, and persuade them to embrace it, and to live according to it, baptizing," &c.—*Hammond.*

"Go into all nations, preach the Gospel to them, work miracles among them, persuade them to come in themselves, and to bring their children with them; and then admit them and theirs into the Church by washing them with water."—*Henry.*

"The writer of the Constitutions, which are ascribed to Clement, explains the sense, 'You must first strip them of all impiety, then impart piety to

lat, ut hoc nihil aliud sit quam illius accessio. Verum quia docere prius jubet Christus quam baptizare, et tantum credentes ad baptismum vult recipi, videtur non rite administrari baptismus nisi fides precesserit. Merito autem ante baptismum locatur verbi fides, quum gentes alienæ prorsus essent a Deo, nec quicquam haberent cum electo populo commune; nam alioqui mendax esset figura, quæ peccatorum remissionem et Spiritus donum offerret incredulis, qui nondum essent Christi membra."—*Calvin on Matt.* xxviii. 19.

[1] "Andate adunque, ed ammæstrate tutti i popoli, per ricogliere i miei sudditi e fedeli . . . il che si far per la predicatione dell' evangelio. Batezzandogli, per sagramento della mia gratia n remessione de' peccati, ed insieme in segno d'obbligatione, dal canto loro di consecrarsi a me."

them, and so make them worthy of baptism.'"—*Grotius.*[1]

"'Make disciples of all nations.' That must be first by preaching and instructing them in the principles of the Christian faith: and Mark expounds it, telling us our Saviour said, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.'"—*Poole.*

"When made disciples, they were to be baptized into the name," &c.—*Boothroyd.*

"Our Lord's words taken together in both verses distinctly enjoin three things, and that in the following order,— *μαθητεύειν*, *βαπτίζειν*, *διδάσκειν*, *i. e.* to proselyte men to Christ, to baptize, and to teach them. It is true, however, that adult persons, before they can be made Christ's disciples, or be proselyted, must be instructed, and brought to believe the great essential truths of Christianity, and even to profess their faith in them."—*Benson.*

"There are two words in this passage which are translated 'teach' and 'teaching.' The former is of the same import with that which is rendered disciples, and it means that general instruction which was necessary to bring men to profess themselves the disciples of Christ; and the other relates to their more particular subsequent instruction in all the various parts of Christianity."—*Scott.*

[2] "Sensum explicat scriptor Constitutionum quæ Clemente adscribuntur: *Δεῖ ὑμᾶς πρότερον πᾶσαν ἀσέβειαν ἐξελοντας, τότε τὴν εὐσέβειαν αὐτοῖς ἐγκαταβάλλεσθαι καὶ τοῦ βαπτίσματος ἀξιῶσαι*: Oportet vos, exempta prius impietate omni, deinde pietatem ipsis inserere, et sic eos baptismo dignari."

"Μαθητεύειν (to make disciples) is here to preach the gospel to all nations, and to engage them to believe it in order to their profession of that faith by baptism, as seems apparent, 1. from the parallel commission, Mark, xvi. 15; 2. from the scripture notion of a disciple, that being still the same as a believer. To be made disciples here is to be taught to believe in Christ, that so they might be his disciples."—*Whitby.*

"There are manifestly three things which our Lord here distinctly enjoins on his Apostles to execute with regard to the nations, μαθητεύειν, βαπτίζειν, διδάσκειν, that is, to convert them to the Christian faith, to initiate the converts into the Church by baptism, and to instruct the baptized in all the duties of the Christian life."—*Campbell, Valpy, Bloomfield.*

"This was the regular course . . . . to change the ἀσέβεια of the converts into εὐσέβεια, and render them worthy of baptism . . . . Thus with Christians collected from all nations, baptism was made the distinguishing mark of their profession of a common faith . . . . μαθητεύειν is the first initiation into the principles preparatory to baptism; διδάσκειν, the more complete instruction afterwards imparted."—*Ellesley.*

Thus a general consent of the best commentators establishes the sense of the commission to be, that the ministers of Christ should do three consecutive duties: 1st, They should lead men to be disciples of Christ by faith, through instruction in the doctrines

of the gospel; 2dly, They should baptize them as professed believers; 3dly, They should instruct them in the details of Christian obedience, and lead them to obey the will of Christ in all things.

This meaning of the passage being established by the meaning of various passages in the New Testament which have a similar construction, and by the consent of the best expositors, is further established by the meaning of the terms employed. There are three expressions employed—to make disciples, to baptize, to teach obedience. From the sense of the terms these must be consecutive acts with respect to each individual. The text cannot mean to make a man a disciple by baptizing and by teaching to obey; but make him a disciple, then baptize him, and then teach him to obey.

1. The meaning of the word "disciple" shows that this text means disciple and baptize, not disciple by baptizing. Because a disciple means a believer, and to make disciples must be to lead men to believe.[1] False professors of faith in Jesus Christ are, indeed, called disciples, because of that profession, John, vi. 60, 61, 66. And Judas, as a professed believer, was called a disciple, Matt. x. 1; Luke, vi. 13. But

[1] "Μαθητεύω, in the New Testament, to make a disciple."—*Liddell.* "To train as a disciple, to teach, to instruct."—*Robinson.* "To draw any one to the Christian religion, to imbue any one with the first elements of the Christian religion; μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη; teach or render followers of my doctrine all the nations, *e. g.* μαθητὰς ποιεῖτε, John, iv. 1.—*Schleusner.* "Μαθητὴς, a disciple (from μαθεῖν, to learn), a learner, a pupil."—*Liddell.* "A follower of Christ, professing his doctrine, a Christian."—*Schleusner.*

as false disciples were false professors of faith, so true disciples are true believers, Luke, xiv. 26, 27, 33; John, viii. 31; xiii. 35; xv. 8.

The Apostles were simply termed disciples, Matt. x. 1; Luke, vi. 13; ix. 1; John, xxi. 24. The seventy evangelists were simply termed disciples, Luke, x. 1, 17, 23. The members of the church at Jerusalem were simply termed disciples, Acts, i. 15; vi. 1; ix. 1. And the members of other churches are so termed, Acts, xiii. 52; xiv. 22; xx. 1, 7; xxi. 4, 16. No persons are true disciples but those who obey him; according to our Lord's express statements: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed," John, viii. 31. "Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples," John, xv. 8. Assuming that the name of disciple might be given to any unconverted man who taught instruction in the Christian religion, it was not such a disciple that Jesus desired to make. He surely wished to have true followers not false ones; and when he told them that while they were occupied in making disciples he would be with them to the end of the world, he certainly promised the aid of his grace to make true disciples not spurious ones; not to impart to ungodly men some elementary and abortive notions of Christianity, but to turn them from the power of Satan unto God, Acts, xxvi. 16–18. When, therefore, the Apostles were called to make disciples of the nations, by the power of their Master (verses 17, 20), they were called to make true

disciples, such disciples as apostles, evangelists, and members of living churches. But baptism cannot make such. Persons coming to be baptized are at the time either believers or unbelievers; if they are unbelievers, baptism cannot make them believers, and therefore cannot make them disciples; and if they are believers, they are disciples already. Baptism cannot make a disciple in the lowest sense, because it cannot make a man even a learner of the Christian doctrine; still less can it make a true disciple, a believer in Christ. The children of God are born again by the word of God, James, i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23; Eph. v. 26. And all who believe are his children, John, i. 12; Gal. iii. 26. But the children of God are disciples of Christ, and all who believe are disciples of Christ. Faith comes by hearing the truth, not by baptism, Rom. x. 17. And, therefore, to make disciples is to bring men to believe by preaching to them the Gospel, not to baptize them; and the text must mean disciple and then baptize, not disciple by baptizing.

If any one still insist that the word "disciple" may be taken in its lowest sense to signify a mere learner, and that, therefore, if discipleship precedes baptism, baptism may precede true faith, I ask what term could have been selected to express that true faith must precede baptism. Had our Lord said, "Go, make men believers, make men saints, convert them, lead them to regeneration and then baptize them;" still objectors, nothing daunted, might have said, "Some men believe without being con-

verted. See Luke, viii. 13. Saints do not mean holy persons, but professors of Christianity. See Locke on 1 Cor. i. 1, 2. Conversion means renunciation of idolatry, and men are regenerated by water, John, iii. 5. So nothing need precede baptism but a general belief that Jesus is the Christ." In the infirmity of language, any text may be evaded by applying to its terms low meanings against common usage and against the indications of the context.

We may further learn that baptism must follow discipleship from the meaning of baptism itself. The use of water is employed in scripture symbolically, to signify the purification of the soul. To wash the soul means, in scripture phraseology, to free it from the guilt and the defilement of sin. Ps. li. 2, 7; Isa. i. 16; Jer. iv. 14. A religious washing must, at the least, signify that the soul requires to be purified; a religious immersion must express the completeness of that required purification. When, therefore, a person voluntarily receives immersion, he voluntarily receives a rite which expresses his need of total purification. But how can any one receive voluntarily a rite which expresses his need of purification without himself expressing that need? And how can a man honestly express his need of purification without seeking to be purified? And how can a man seek to be entirely purified, and not seek to lead a life of holiness and piety? He who does all this is a true disciple; and he who professes all this is a professed disciple.

And since baptism itself implies all this, it is in itself a profession of discipleship; and therefore baptism, from the symbolical meaning of the act, ought to be preceded by discipleship.

I think that we may learn the same thing from the next words employed by our Saviour in the text. When he said, "Go ye and disciple, baptizing εἰς τὸ ὄνομα, unto the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," he manifested his will that baptism should follow discipleship. The ordinary meaning of εἰς is "into" or "unto;" and in the New Testament it is used to express dedication to any one. The following are instances: Rom. xi. 36, "To him, εἰς αὐτὸν, are all things;" 1 Cor. x. 2, "They were all baptized unto Moses, εἰς τὸν Μωϋσῆν;" 1 Cor. i. 13, "Were ye baptized unto the name, εἰς τὸ ὄνομα, of Paul?" Rom. vi. 3, "As many of us as were baptized unto Jesus Christ, εἰς Χριστὸν." In these cases, to be baptized unto Christ, or unto Moses, or unto Paul, means so as to be his follower or disciple, consecrated to his service. "The expression, to be baptized unto Christ, in the style of Paul, does not designate a simple external profession of the religion of the gospel, but the act of heart by which one accepts that religion; an act of which submission to the rite of baptism was the public and ordained expression."[1] Hence immersion unto the name of God means consecration to God; and the words,

[1] Hodge, Rom. vi. 3. French translation.

"Baptizing them unto the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," means consecrating them unto the Triune God.[1] Such being the meaning of baptism unto the name of God, recognised by the best commentators with a very general consent, how can an ignorant and unconverted man

[1] *Unto the name.* "Per consegrargli al solo vero Iddio rivelato in tre persone."—*Diodati.*

Unto the name. "Into the profession of the Trinity, *i. e.* one God in three persons, in opposition to all false gods and false worship; and thereby to dedicate and give up ourselves to them, according to their personal relations: to the Father, as our Creator, to love, serve, obey him, and be happy in the enjoyment of him; to Christ, as our Redeemer, to free us from the guilt of sin and the wrath of God; to the Holy Ghost, to guide and sanctify us, and comfort us with the sense of our present interest in God's love and the hopes of future glory."—*Samuel Clark.*

Unto the name. "Into the profession of the Trinity of the persons in the one Divine Being; dedicating the persons baptized to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and thereby obliging them to worship and serve God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; for in baptism there is both a solemn dedication of the person to God and a solemn stipulation, the person baptized either covenanting for himself that he will be the Lord's, or his parents covenanting for him."—*Poole.*

"To be baptized unto any one, or unto his name, is to bind and devote oneself to him, and to wish to be called by his name."—*Grotius.*

"To be baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, implies a professed dependence on these three divine persons, jointly and equally, and a devoting of ourselves to them as worshippers and servants."—*Benson and Scott.*

"Baptizing them unto the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by a solemn profession of the only true religion, and by a solemn devotion to the service of the sacred Trinity."—*Barnes.*

make this profession without hypocrisy or presumption? And how can a minister of Christ, without unfaithfulness to his commission, sanction such worthless profession? Certainly our Lord did not intend it; and therefore, when he said, "Disciple all nations, baptizing them unto the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," he ordained not that they should be immersed in water unto the name of God, with a view to eventual consecration to him, but that they should consecrate themselves to him first, and then profess it by immersion in water unto his name.

We may learn, also, that discipleship precedes baptism by the last clause of the commission; for if baptism is to precede discipleship because the command to baptize is in the present participle, then the teaching of the details of Christian obedience must precede discipleship, because the command to teach is likewise in the participle present. Now how can ministers teach all the commands of their Master to those who are not his disciples? Such persons cannot be expected to receive his orders. The reason why persons are expected to receive them is, that, being disciples, they recognise his authority. A servant will listen to his master's commands, and all others will spurn them. Hence it is apparent that when Christ said, "Disciple the nations, teaching them to obey all my commands," he meant, "Make them disciples, and then teach them to obey." But since the expression, "Disciple teaching," means dis-

ciple first, and then teach, the expression, "Disciple baptizing," likewise means disciple first, and then baptize.

We may further learn the same thing from the terms in which our Lord, shortly after the baptismal commission recorded by Matthew, renewed that commission according to the narrative of Mark, saying to the eleven disciples as follows, "*Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,*" Mark, xvi. 16, 17. Here our Lord declared: first, That his disciples should preach the gospel, urging men in general to believe it, which answers to the corresponding command in Matthew to disciple the nations; and secondly, He promised salvation to all who should first believe and then be baptized. That this is the order of ideas in this command is apparent, first, from the order of the terms employed; and secondly, from the connection here established between baptism and salvation.

The order of words in any sentence expressing various actions generally, though not always, indicates the order of the actions themselves; because in expressing various consecutive acts, it is natural to express the first action first. The instances of this harmony between the order of the words and the order of the acts are innumerable, and generally we should feel that a reversal of the order of the words would violate our sense of propriety. A few specimens may illustrate this fact. Had the wise men who visited Bethlehem said respecting Jesus, not

"We have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him," but, "We are come to worship, and have seen his star," they would have spoken less exactly, Matt. ii. 2. If John had said to his disciples, "Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is cast into the fire and hewn down," he would have spoken less properly than when he said of such a tree, "It is hewn down and cast into the fire," Matt. iii. 10. And similarly, when our Lord said, "The rain descended and the floods came" (Matt. vii. 27), the order of words indicated the order of the facts. And that there is in our text a harmony between the order of the words and of the facts, is rendered more probable by our finding the same order to be invariable in the New Testament. If the order of the facts had been that persons should first be baptized and then believe, we should find this order of words in some places, but this latter order of words is never found. Acts, ii. 38, we read, "Repent and be baptized;" Acts, xviii. 18, "Many believed and were baptized;" and Eph. v. 4, "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism." But we never find, "Be baptized and repent;" "They were baptized and believed;" "There is one baptism, one faith." This constant order of the words cannot be accidental, and must intimate that belief precedes baptism in reality, as the one precedes the other in the language of scripture.[1]

[1] In John, iii. 5, which is indeed a somewhat similar passage, the water is mentioned before the Spirit, because the thought to be conveyed to Nicodemus, that regeneration by the Spirit was the

Secondly, there is a connection established in these words between baptism and salvation which forbids the idea that baptism precedes belief. It is not indeed said by our Lord that he who is not baptized shall be damned, because many cases are conceivable in which baptism would be impossible; but since it is said, "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved," we must conclude that baptism is generally necessary to salvation. And this is still more strongly stated by our Lord in his recorded conversation with Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John, iii. 5. And Peter expressly says, "Baptism doth save us," 1 Peter, iii. 21. Now, if baptism had been the initiatory rite by which heathens without faith were to be made catechumens, who could clearly be made so as well without it, how could it be generally necessary to salvation? Is it conceivable on this hypothesis that "No one can enter the kingdom of heaven without being born of water?" or is the Apostle Peter's statement intelligible that "Baptism doth save us?" But if baptism follows faith, all these scriptural statements become plain. Since men are pardoned and justified for the sake of Christ alone (Rom. iii. 4; 1 Cor. i. 30), they are therefore justified by faith alone without the deeds of the law. John, i. 12, 13; iii. 16, 36; xiii. 39; xvi. 31; Rom. iii. 28; Gal. iii.

essential thing, required that this spiritual regeneration should be mentioned last. There is in words an order of emphasis as well as an order of time.

26. But as a true faith must manifest itself, and baptism is one appointed mode of its manifestation, the faith which does not lead one who says that he believes in Christ, and who knows that Christ has enjoined baptism upon his disciples, to be baptized, is a false faith. Since he who believes in Christ must confess him, confession is declared to be as necessary to salvation as faith: "*Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven,*" Matt. x. 32, 33. "*If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation,*" Rom. x. 9, 10. "*But the fearful . . . shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone,*" Rev. xxi. 8. We are saved by grace through faith, without the deeds of the law: but faith without a confession of Christ is impossible. And therefore since confession is the necessary manifestation of faith, it is as necessary to salvation as faith is. And as baptism is an appointed method of confession, it is generally, to those who know Christ's appointment, as necessary as confession is. Since, therefore, faith is said to save us, because it is the instrument through which God saves us, so baptism is said to save us, because it is the necessary expression of true faith. If baptism is placed before faith as the initiatory rite of catechu-

nens, we cannot understand why it should be gene-
ally necessary to salvation; but if it be placed after
aith, as its appointed expression, then its necessity
s a confession of Christ is plain. And this being
he case, we may conclude from this, as from other
assages of scripture, that baptism being made ne-
essary to salvation in scripture, is a profession of
aith in Christ made by a penitent believer.

From all these considerations we may gather that
ur Lord, in this commission, intended his ministers
rst to convert men by preaching to them the gospel,
hen to baptize them as disciples, and finally to
rge them when baptized to be entirely obedient to
im as their Lord. The structure of this sentence,
hen compared with sentences of similar structure in
he New Testament, establishes this meaning: it is
stablished by the meaning of the word "disciple,"
hich is equivalent to believer; by the meaning of
mmersion, which, as a spontaneous religious act,
nvolves a profession to renounce sin and lead a new
fe; by the prescribed baptismal form of immersion
nto the name of God, which signifies consecration
o him; by the place which the third command to
nforce obedience to Christ's laws must have in the
ulfilment of the commission; by the order of the
erms in the parallel passage in Mark; and by the
onnection which that passage reveals between bap-
sm and salvation. On all these accounts we may
onclude that baptism, as a profession of repentance,
aith, and consecration to the Triune God, must be
receded by faith and by discipleship to Christ.

CHAPTER II.

BAPTISM TO BE ADMINISTERED TO NONE BUT BELIEVERS.

HAVING already proved that Christ has commanded his ministers to baptize believers, I proceed to show that no one who does not make a consistent profession of faith ought to be baptized.

I.—MEANING OF THE COMMISSION.

1. This follows directly from the commission given by Christ to the disciples; for since he said to them, "Go and disciple all nations, baptizing them," thus directing them to make men disciples and then to baptize them, whence can Christian ministers derive authority to reverse that order? Why did Christ say that they were to baptize believers if faith was not necessary to baptism? If all men indiscriminately might be baptized, then with respect to baptism faith was immaterial; and if faith is immaterial to baptism, why was it specified in the commission? When Oliver Cromwell, who saw that the forces of the Parliament were beaten by the troops of Charles the First, because there were gentlemen in the ranks of the royal army, and none but low men of worth-

ss character in the other, sent out his recruiting ergeants to enlist godly and sober young men into is regiment, would they have been entitled to enlist runkards and profligates because he had not ex-ressly excluded them? His specification of the odly and the sober excluded all the rest. And hen the Lord Jesus Christ has commanded his inisters to enlist believers under his banners by aptism, he has excluded all the rest. When God njoined upon Abraham and on his children and ervants circumcision as the token of his covenant ith that family, the mention of these classes ex-uded all others. And unless they had received xpress permission to admit proselytes into the rivileges of the national covenant, they would have ad no right to admit them. So when Christ has eclared that believers shall be admitted to the token f the covenant of grace, no one else can be admitted o that token without express permission? To have rcumcised a heathen stranger without command om God would have been presumptuous in the sraelites, and to baptize an unbeliever without ommand from Christ must be presumptuous in a hristian minister now. From our Lord's naming elievers as the proper subjects for baptism, it is ain that none others must be baptized unless hristian ministers have his authority, expressed or nplied, to baptize them. And as he has never ven such permission, it follows that none but those ho make a consistent profession of faith ought to e baptized.

Our Lord has here forbidden any persons to apply for baptism who are not true believers, and he has forbidden his ministers to baptize any who do not seem to be true believers. But as no man can read another's heart, reason agrees with apostolic precedents to declare that no minister should refuse baptism to a candidate of sound creed and of Christian habits because he does not feel sure of his conversion: otherwise baptism might be refused to many true believers. Real faith, therefore, warrants the candidate to apply for baptism, and a credible profession of faith warrants the minister to receive him.

2. It appears, further, that no one but a believer should be baptized from the nature of the profession made in baptism.

Baptism being, as we have proved, a profession of repentance and of a new life, in which the baptized person is consecrated to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, no one but a believer can make this profession without falsehood.

How can one who does not mean to renounce all sin be immersed, to signify his death unto sin, without hypocrisy? How can one whose heart is unchanged profess, by rising from the water, that he means to live a new life of faith, of gratitude, of obedience, of spirituality, when he has no such intention? How can one who is still a votary of pleasure, a servant of the world, a slave of Satan, profess without falsehood, to consecrate himself to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, by being immersed in water unto the name of God? And since

here is manifest falsehood in the profession made
n baptism by every unregenerate person, how can
hristian ministers have authority from Christ to
nction such falsehood by administering baptism to
ny persons who are manifestly unconverted? No
ne, therefore, who does not make a consistent pro-
ssion of faith can be admitted to baptism without
nanifest disregard of the nature of the ordinance, or
ithout sanctioning sin in the person baptized.

II.—Jewish Baptism.

As the terms in which the disciples were com-
issioned to baptize, and the meaning of the pre-
ribed symbol, prove that our Lord meant believers
be baptized, and as he never authorized the bap-
sm of any others, we must conclude that he did not
tend any others to be baptized. Other considera-
ons confirm this conclusion. Among these I may
ention the consideration of the facts of Jewish bap-
sm. The baptism instituted by our Lord being,
ke Jewish baptism, an immersion in water for reli-
ous purposes, and the initiatory rite of his religion,
e may expect to find an analogy between them.
"We do not assume," says Mr. Godwin, "that
hristian baptism was in all respects the same as
ewish baptism; but as it possessed the same form
nd bore the same appellation, at least a presumption
ists that there is a general accordance. Christianity
as an external purification with water, which is per-
rmed as a religious service, and which is named a
ptism: Judaism had external purifications with

water, which were performed as religious services, and which were named baptisms; and one of them was a rite of initiation into Judaism. In investigating the nature and usage of Christian baptism, we ought to look to the known nature and usage of similar rites; and we may justly conclude that agreement exists where difference is not proved."—*Godwin*, 203, 204. At the same time, since the first covenant was faulty (Heb. viii. 7, 8); since its ordinances were weak and beggarly elements of religion (Gal. iv. 9), carnal ordinances (Heb. ix. 10), a system of types (Heb. ix. 9), having a shadow only of good things to come (Heb. x. 1), in which the priest "served unto the example and shadow of heavenly things" (Heb. viii. 5), we may expect to find in its ordinances just such a difference as existed between a religion which, containing spiritual truth, was eminently ceremonial, and a religion which, containing some positive ordinances, was eminently spiritual. This analogy and this difference between Jewish and Christian baptism evidently exist. In Numbers, xix. 17–19, we read, "For an unclean person they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel. And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day; and on the seventh day he shall purify himself and wash his clothes, *and bathe himself in water*, and shall be clean at even." Hence, as the heathen were unclean, they were obliged, before they could be admitted into association with the

ews, to be bathed or baptized; and this baptism as required of every proselyte. "When they received a proselyte to their religion they both circumcised and baptized him; affirming that this baptism as a kind of regeneration, whereby he was made a ew man. . . . That the Jews really did attach the lea of regeneration to baptism in the case of converts is well known from Maimonides and other rabbins."—*Calmet*, "Baptism." "Those that were hus initiated did put off all their former relations, ot only their former worships and manners, but heir relations of kindred, and come forth as if they ad been new born of a new mother, as the Talmud ften expresses it."—*Hammond* on Matt. iii. 1. et us observe that this baptism was not the sign f a purification to be effected afterwards, but was self a ceremonial purification. When the unclean erson was bathed, he was ceremonially clean, Numb. ix. 19. "A person applying to the priest for purification professed by word or deed that he was then ree from the disease which had occasioned his impurity. He was carefully examined by the priest hat it might be known that his profession was true. His baptism was a sign of restored health; and, in eneral, baptism was a sign that there had been eremonial impurity, and that the occasion of this mpurity was removed."—*Godwin*, 207. So when the roselyte was baptized he was legally clean. "Those ho were proselytes to Judaism, being unclean, were urified with water."—*Godwin*, 207. Once immersed, hey might, as clean persons, participate in Jewish

ordinances. For this is the doctrine of the Mishna: "As to a proselyte who becomes a proselyte on the evening of the passover, the followers of Shammai say, Let him be baptized, and let him eat the passover in the evening."—*Wilson*, 190. Thus we see just so much analogy and so much difference between the Jewish and Christian baptism as the nature of the two religions indicated. Jewish baptism was the sign of a ceremonial cleansing, Christian baptism the sign of a spiritual cleansing; the one signified a change of external condition, the other a change of spiritual condition; the one a renunciation of heathenism, the other a renunciation of sin; the one a new Jewish life, the other a new spiritual life; the one a total change of habits, the other a total change of heart; the one admitted to the society of Jews, the other to the society of saints: both regarded what was done already, as well as what was to be done afterwards; both were the profession of a past change, and of a present resolution to lead another life. The proselyte was not baptized that he might afterwards be taught how to become a Jew, but because he now became one; and so the Christian proselyte is not baptized that he may be taught how to become a Christian, but because he is already become one. As repentance for heathenism, and faith in the authority of Moses, were to precede Jewish baptism, so repentance for sin and faith in the Redeemer were to precede Christian baptism. As the baptized Jewish proselyte became, by Jewish baptism, the avowed disciple of Moses, entitled to all

Mosaic ordinances, so the baptized Christian proselyte becomes, by Christian baptism, the avowed disciple of Christ, entitled to all Christian ordinances. The Jewish baptism was intended for none but believers in Moses, the Christian baptism is intended for none but believers in Christ. As a change of opinions and habits preceded an introduction to the society of Jews, so a change of heart and life ought to precede an introduction to the communion of saints.

III.—Baptism of John.

We may, further, be led to conclude that none but believers should receive baptism by considering the administration of baptism by John the Baptist. John came as the forerunner of Jesus, to bear witness to him and to lead men to repentance as a preparation for the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith. The Almighty, by Isaiah and by Malachi, thus predicted his ministry: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God," Isaiah, xl. 3. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse," Mal. iv. 5, 6. According, then, to the Old Testament, John was to be a great reformer, and to preach with great success. The same was predicted by the angel who appeared

to his father Zacharias in the temple: "Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God: and he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord," Luke, i. 16, 17. And his father himself predicted, "Thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins," Luke, i. 76, 77.

At length John began his ministry, and called men to repent, because "the kingdom of God was at hand," Matt. iii. 2. Thus he required two things: first, a thorough change of mind and life, expressed by the word "repentance;" and faith in the Redeemer to come, to whom, indeed, he repeatedly bore witness; John, i. 6-8, 23-36. A disciple of John, therefore, was one who repented of his sins, and believed that the promised Christ was about to appear. The prophets predicted that he was to make many such. But what evidence have we of the fulfilment of their predictions, except that numbers were baptized by him? "Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan." I know no other proof that the ministry of John corresponded to the predictions concerning him; and the value of this proof depends upon the conditions of his baptism. If he baptized all applicants indis-

riminately, then there is no proof whatever that
ie "made ready a people prepared for the Lord,"
ecause superstitious or sordid motives may have
nduced numbers to apply for baptism. But if he
aptized those only who solemnly professed to re-
ent and to believe in the Christ shortly to come,
hen the multitudes who were baptized by him show
hat he signally fulfilled the prophecies concerning
im. It is, therefore, probable,—since he certainly
ulfilled those prophecies, and the sacred narratives
ecord no other proof of the fulfilment,—that these
umerous baptisms furnish that proof, and that
ose who were baptized by John made a solemn
rofession of their repentance and faith.

It is improbable that John would baptize on lower
erms, because he declared that the approach of the
ingdom of heaven called for repentance (Matt. iii.
); and as he was the herald of Christ, appointed to
ead men to a more spiritual dispensation than that
f Moses, he would not be satisfied with lower quali-
cations for baptism than those which were de-
anded by the Jewish priests. If a heathen wished
r Jewish baptism, he must renounce his idols, pro-
ss his belief in the divine authority of Moses, and
romise obedience to the Mosaic laws: would John,
ien, baptize a Jew unless he renounced his sins,
nd professed belief in the approaching advent of
hrist, with his intention to keep the commands of
od? What he had ever seen demanded in the ini-
atory rite of the more carnal religion, he would not
spense with in the initiatory rite which was to

enrol men under his ministry as expectants of the Messiah.

The narrative shows that he did enforce these conditions of baptism. In Mark, i. 4, we read, "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins," Luke, iii. 2; Acts, xiii. 24. If we suppose, with the advocates of indiscriminate baptism, that this expression means a baptism which demanded repentance — and less than this assuredly the words could not mean — then his baptism must have involved a profession of repentance on the part of the baptized. For to apply for a baptism which pledged them to repent, while they were avowedly impenitent, would be mockery. Imagine a person coming to John to be baptized, declaring that he did not repent of his sins and had not turned to God but that he wished to be instructed, and allowed the necessity of repentance, of what use would such baptism be? He could be instructed just as well before baptism, and since baptism signified the necessity of a total renunciation of sin, to receive it without being grieved for sin, or intending to renounce it was to violate the baptismal instruction while receiving it. The repentance, moreover, to which John called them was connected with the expectation of Christ, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is on Christ Jesus," Acts, xix. 4. If, therefore, any one

sked for baptism while disbelieving the near advent f the Redeemer, he was rejecting the doctrine of ohn, and John would certainly not baptize as one f his disciples any one who rejected his doctrine. he character, therefore, of John's baptism renders it robable that he administered it to none but those vho professed to be penitent believers in the Saviour o come.

And the evangelists declare that this was the pro- ession of those who came to be baptized by him. Matthew relates, that they "were baptized of him n Jordan, ἐξομολογούμενοι, confessing their sins."[1] hose who were baptized by him did not own their ins reluctantly but earnestly, not slightly but fully, s the word, ἐξομολογούμενοι, here used means. Such onfessions make the penitent accept the Gospel ully. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is he kingdom of heaven," Matt. v. 3. Such con- essions were like those of the publican who was leclared by Jesus to receive pardon, Luke, xviii. 13. David knew their value when he wrote, "I said, I vill confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and hou forgavest the iniquity of my sin," Ps. xxxii. 5. Paul recognised it when he wrote, "Godly sorrow vorketh repentance to salvation," 2 Cor. vii. 10. And the promise to them is ample and explicit: 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just o forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all

[1] "Ἐξομολογούμενοι τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν, fully confessing their ins; ἐξομολογέομαι, to confess in full."—*Liddell.* "Libere di- erteque—freely and copiously."—*Bengel.*

unrighteousness," 1 John, i. 9. Such confessions show that many of those baptized by John were real penitents.

The same truth is intimated by the following expression used by John in his ministry, "I indeed baptize you εἰς μετάνοιαν, unto repentance," Matt. iii. 11; for by these words he declared that repentance must accompany his baptism, and that not at any distant time, but then. Thus the expression used by Peter to the Jewish multitude, "Repent, and be baptized εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, unto the remission of sins," signified the necessary and immediate effect of baptism, Acts, ii. 38. Similarly, the expression used by our Lord at the institution of the Supper, "This do, εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν, unto a recollection of me," or "for a remembrance of me" (Luke, xxii. 19), means a recollection of him at the same time. The words, therefore, used by John signify that those who come to his baptism must repent at the same time. Now as the water could not effect repentance, and yet the repentance must be felt then, it is plain that the applicants must have repented before, and that, coming to baptism with a penitent heart, they there confirmed their repentance. They were baptized unto repentance, *i. e.*, unto a profession of repentance, as Christians are baptized unto the name of God, or unto a profession of devotedness to him.

This view is further confirmed by the following expression of John, "The Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,"

John, iv. 1. According to these words, to make disciples is a different thing from baptizing them, and the one is prior to the other. Jesus made disciples, and then, by the hands of his disciples, baptized them. But the same thing is also said of John, for the words mean, "John made disciples and baptized them, but Jesus made and baptized more." All therefore who received baptism from John were first his disciples. Now a disciple was one who at least accepted his chief doctrines, the need of repentance and the approach of the Redeemer. No one was, therefore, a disciple who did not acknowledge his need of μετάνοια, a change of mind, and look for the Redeemer, and no others were baptized. Moved by fashion or interest, probably many of the Scribes and Pharisees applied for baptism; but as he knew the character of their class, if not their individual character, instead of welcoming them to his baptism, he exclaimed, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance," Matt. iii. 7, 8. "The Sadducees were as proud of their superior discernment as the Pharisees of their superior sanctity, and with as little reason. But either of them were prepared, by repentance and humiliation before God, to welcome the mercy and spiritual blessings of the Messiah. Instead, therefore, of sanctioning their character or of courting their favour, John plainly, and even roughly, addressed them, as a generation of vipers, a race of subtle, designing men, of poisonous principles

and practice, dangerous to all around them, the genuine children of the old serpent. If, however, they truly repented, they might be admitted to his baptism."—*Scott;* Matt. iii. 7–10.

Here let me add the testimony of Josephus to the fact that John required from those who came to him for baptism a previous profession of repentance and faith, premising that Josephus lived so near to the time of John that he must have learned from many of his disciples the character and circumstances of his baptism. "Herod slew him, who was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another and piety towards God, and so come to baptism. For that the washing would be acceptable to him, if they made use of it, not in order to the putting away of *some* sins, but for the purification of the body, *supposing still that the soul was thoroughly purified beforehand by righteousness.*"—*Ant.* xviii. 5. *Whiston's Translation.*

These and similar considerations have brought the best expositors of scripture to much agreement on this matter.

Henry says, "Those who received his doctrine and submitted to his discipline were baptized of him in Jordan, thereby professing their repentance and their belief that the kingdom of the Messiah was at hand. They testified their repentance by confessing their sins."

"Baptism in the adult," says Doddridge on Acts, xxii. 16, "excepting in the very peculiar instance of

ur Lord, was a token of confession and humiliation or sin, on which account it is called the baptism of epentance (Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 4, &c.), and of a esire to be cleansed from it, and being administered o such professed penitents by divine appointment, as token of favourable regard to them, it was a seal of ardon."

"It is most certain that a profession of faith and epentance was ordinarily required before the bapsm of adult persons."—*Poole* on Matt. iii. 6.

"They acknowledged in words their sinfulness nd guilt, professed repentance for and a detestation f all their sins, and submitted to be baptized in oken of their being convinced of their need of paron and purification."—*Benson.*

"Adult Jews, professing repentance and a dispotion to become Messiah's subjects, were the only ersons whom John admitted to baptism. . . . John aptized the people with water, calling them to epentance, and making baptism their outward proession of it, and the avowed beginning of a new fe."—*Scott.*

And Mr. Godwin admits that the baptism of John ndicated "a professed willingness to commence" "a ew course of life," "embodying in a public act the esolution to pursue purity," and was "the avowal f a present resolution to live in the manner reuired," made by "professed penitents."—*Godwin,* 35, 236.

To this view there are some objections, which shall ere be noticed:—

1. 'It is impossible that John should examine such numbers with a view to determine their conversion.'

Ans. (1.) They were either baptized as penitent believers who had received his doctrine, or as catechumens desiring to be taught by him. It would require as much time to teach them the doctrines and duties of religion after baptism as before it. (2.) It is not asserted that he ascertained their conversion, but that he required a profession of repentance and faith in the approaching advent of Christ, which would require very little time.

2. 'John baptized all applicants, because he said to them all, I baptize YOU with water, Luke, iii. 16.'

Ans. As John said to all the people respecting Christ, "He shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost," when it is certain that Christ baptized in the Holy Spirit none but believers, so when he said to them at the same time, "I baptize you in water," he meant that he also baptized penitent believers, Luke, iii. 16.

3. 'Since "Jerusalem and all Judea" were baptized by John (Matt. iii. 5, 6), it is not conceivable that all the baptized were penitent believers.'

Ans. (1.) It is no more difficult to imagine that all the baptized repented, than that they all "fully confessed" their sins; and yet we know that they thus confessed them, Matt. iii. 6. (2.) It is not asserted that they were all penitent believers, but that they all made a solemn profession of repentance and faith; which is proved by the statement that

ey fully confessed their sins (Matt. iii. 6), and that ey were disciples, John, iv. 1.

4. 'If baptism signified a profession of repentance, w could Jesus Christ be baptized?'

Ans. If the eating of the Passover signified faith the atoning sacrifice of Christ, how could Jesus t the Passover? His case was an exception: and was baptized "to fulfil all righteousness," *i. e.* to nour that divine ordinance of baptism, and bear tness to John's prophetic commission, Matt. 15.

5. 'We read (Luke, vii. 29), the Pharisees and vyers rejected the counsel of God against themves, being not baptized of John. If John refused baptize them, they could not be said to reject his ptism.'

Ans. They rejected his baptism by rejecting its nditions. They were called to repent and be baped; and refusing to repent, they rejected both pentance and baptism, saying of John, "He hath devil," Luke, vii. 32.

On the whole, then, we see that there was a simiity in John's baptism to the baptism of Jewish oselytes, and a difference between them. This ptism was designed for similar ends, but it was re spiritual; it required a similar profession, but e more complete. The priests said to the heathen, Repent, for the Jews are the people of God;" John d to the Jews, "Repent, for the kingdom of hean is at hand." They required the renunciation of ls, he the renunciation of sin; they demanded

faith in the authority of Moses, he in the coming Saviour; they demanded obedience to the Mosaic law, he to the whole will of God. The disciple of the priests renounced idolatry, conformed to the Mosaic ritual, and was baptized; the disciple of John confessed his sins, avowed his belief that the Christ was at hand, and was baptized. All this, if I mistake not, Mr. Godwin virtually admits when he says that John's baptism indicated "a professed willingness to commence a new course of life" (p. 235); and the "avowal of a present resolution to live in the manner required" (p. 235); so that each baptized person was a "professed penitent" (p. 236). For if a man really "wills to commence a new course of life," he does commence it; and if he "resolves to live a godly life," he does live it, since each man lives as he wills and resolves to live. And if each of John's disciples professed this willingness and avowed this resolution at the time of baptism, they were, as Mr. Godwin says, "professed penitents;" they made a profession of repentance and faith; and none were baptized by John but those who, in profession at least, were penitent believers.

IV.—First Baptisms by the Disciples of Christ.

While John was baptizing Jesus began his ministry, and his earliest disciples, imitating the custom of the priests and the practice of John, began to baptize disciples to him. The following is the only notice of this fact to be found in the four

vangelists: "After these things came Jesus and is disciples into the land of Judea; and there he arried with them, and baptized. . . . And they John's disciples) came unto John, and said unto im, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to hom thou barest witness, behold, the same bapizeth, and all men come to him," John, iii. 22, 26. When, therefore, the Lord knew how the Pharisees ad heard that Jesus made and baptized more disiples than John (though Jesus himself baptized not, ut his disciples), he left Judea," John, iv. 1–3. The manner in which this practice of the first disciples is ere mentioned, without any recorded command of Christ, before the disciples had been called by him o any ministry, while they were yet very partially nstructed, without the slightest comment by the vangelist upon the nature of the transaction, shows hat the disciples were simply imitating the practice f John and the custom of their country. It follows, that their baptisms resembled in its general haracter the baptisms by the priests and the bapism by John. In each case the baptism implied the renunciation of evil and assenting to the doctrine and commandment of the person baptizing. As hose who were baptized by the priests renounced dolatry, and those who were baptized by John renounced sin, so those who were baptized by these disciples renounced sin. As those baptized by the priests conformed to the Mosaic ritual, and those baptized by John professed their belief of his doctrine, so those baptized by the disciples professed

their belief in the doctrine of Jesus. And this is declared by the brief record which states that Jesus "made and baptized disciples," John, iv. 1. The disciples, therefore, baptized those only who were first made their fellow-disciples.

V.—Apostolic Baptisms.

We will now examine in succession the cases of baptism subsequent to the resurrection of our Lord, which furnish the most explicit and unanswerable commentary upon the commission to baptize, which he had previously given to his disciples.

Baptism of three thousand converts at the day of Pentecost.—Acts, ii.

On the day of Pentecost, the feast of first-fruits, upon which God meant to gather the first-fruits of an universal harvest of souls, the Holy Spirit who had been so long promised, the great Teacher who was to glorify Christ and to change the condition of the world, was at length bestowed on the Church of Christ. About one hundred and twenty disciples, including the eleven apostles, and many doubtless of the seventy evangelists, had continued in prayer to God, and were waiting for the promised Spirit, when suddenly they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Bathed in a divine influence, of which the sound of a rushing wind which filled the house and cloven tongues of fire resting on each were the external signs, they were at once new men. Animated with zeal and charity, with faith and hope, with desire to

lorify Jesus and to save sinners, with resistless
isdom and with inexhaustible patience they began
o preach Christ to the multitudes then gathered
ithin the walls of Jerusalem. Thousands of devout
ersons, who, though prejudiced, perhaps, and super-
titious, still were earnest in religion, ἄνδρες εὐλαβεῖς,
ere met to keep the feast of first-fruits.[1] In ten or
welve different languages these rude and simple
alileans began to preach to the multitudes; groups
om the different nations gathered round the speakers,
ho were pouring forth a tide of holy eloquence in
eir several languages, as they "spoke the wonder-
l works of God," τὰ μεγαλεῖα τοῦ Θεοῦ. Their minds
nd hearts were full of Christ and of salvation by his
oning blood, Luke, xxiv. 52, 53. And now that
e Holy Spirit gave them utterance to speak of the
magnificent things" of God, they must have ex-
ounded fully to the people their guilt and ruin by
ature and practice with the atoning death and
lorious triumph of Christ their Saviour (11). The
iraculous utterance excited in the crowd the ut-
ost astonishment, and their attention being fully
ained, these great truths, so demonstrated, still
ore excited their wonder (12). Then it was that
eter addressed the Jews of Jerusalem, and the
evout strangers surrounding them (14). All this,
e declared, was the work of the Spirit promised by
od through the prophet Joel (14–18); and afforded

[1] Acts, ii. 5; Ἄνδρες εὐλαβεῖς. Εὐλαβὴς, devout, reverential,
ike, ii. 25; Acts, viii. 2, from εὐλαβέομαι, to reverence God,
eb. xi. 7. See *Liddell.*

proof that the great predicted day of the Lord was at hand (16–20). Jesus had been wickedly murdered by them according to the purpose of God; but according to prophecy had been raised from the dead, of which they were all witnesses (22–32); that crucified Jesus was ascended to glory; it was he who had given them the Holy Spirit, of which they then saw the undeniable and marvellous proofs (33); and he was thus proved to be Lord and Christ, who would make his foes his footstool (33–36). Numbers who heard this were pricked in the heart κατενύγησαν τῇ καρδίᾳ; all that they saw and heard convinced them that Jesus was the true, the great, the long-expected, the triumphant Messiah. He had come and been rejected, hated, crucified. Some had, probably, actively shared in his murder; some had justified the priests; all must have been talking and hearing of his recent crucifixion; and probably following their hierarchy, had condemned him as an impostor and blasphemer. It being impossible that this event was unnoticed by them (see 22, 23; Matt. xxi. 8, 10, 12), and almost impossible that they had not through prejudice condemned him we may infer that they felt the guilt of the nation and their own. If he was the Lord of all, and the of his enemies, what would become of them? Convinced, therefore, of their sin and danger by the Holy Spirit working with the word (Mark xvi. 20; Heb. ii. 4; 1 Pet. i. 12), they exclaimed, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (37.) To whom Peter replied, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you

n the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of ins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (38). They were thus called to renounce heir sins, especially to turn from their sin of unbelief, to believe in Jesus as Lord and Christ, to onfess their faith in him by being baptized in his ame, and then they would have a free and full orgiveness, with an influence from the Holy Spirit, uch as had been promised by the prophet Joel, and uch as they, the apostles and disciples of Jesus, hen possessed. Much explanatory conversation ollowed (40). To that complete μετάνοια, conversion, hat open profession of faith, and the remission of ins which would instantly attend it, they were called hen. In much fervent exhortation, with a fuller xplanation of these great truths, with more detail of acts and doctrines, the Apostle continued to address hem. "With many other words did he testify and xhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward eneration" (40). Upon this ἀσμένως ἀποδεξάμενοι, hey "gladly" and completely "received his word" 41). They received his declaration that Jesus was Lord nd Christ, and believed; they received his exhortion to turn to God, and they turned and repented nto life (Luke, iii. 3; xxiv. 47; Acts, v. 31; 2 Cor. vii. 10); they believed in the promise of ardon, and relied on the promised gift of the Spirit (30); they determined to seek salvation (40); or all this, and more, is included in their hearty eception of his word, and, therefore, though deeply onvinced of sin (37), they rejoiced in this great

salvation (41). The suddenness of their conversion is not surprising: they were devout persons, acquainted therefore with the scriptures; the facts were wonderful, the proofs were complete; already the nation was plunged in guilt by having rejected and crucified him; inestimable blessings, of which those miraculous gifts of the Spirit which they witnessed were pledges, would follow their faith; if there was reason to become disciples of Jesus at all, there was reason to turn to him them: that was a day appointed for glorifying Christ, and there was the Omnipotent Spirit in all his power. In one hour Zaccheus had welcomed Christ; the dying thief had been converted as he hung upon the cross; Paul, the blaspheming persecutor, became at once a zealous apostle; so these were "made willing in the day of Christ's power," Psalm cx. 3. Their eager looks and earnest tones, their application for baptism though it would expose them to persecution,[1] and their thorough acquiescence in all that they heard preached to them, indicated to the Apostles that they were earnest and sincere disciples and, professing to be penitent believers,—for how else could the historian know that they "gladly received his word?" (41)—they were baptized. The result shows that the Apostles judged of them rightly; for the evangelist records that they were *added* that day —they were added to the believers in Jesus—added to the saved. The same word is used, and the same

[1] John, ix. 22; Acts, iv. 3; v. 16, 33, 40; vii. 54, 59; viii. 1-3; ix. 1-3; 1 Thess. ii. 14; Heb. x. 32, 33, &c. &c.

thing is recorded as in the 47th verse, "The Lord added to the Church that day three thousand σωζομένους, saved," and of this they forthwith afforded proofs. For after professing their faith by baptism, they continued stedfast in maintaining the doctrine of the Apostles, sought their society, received with them the Lord's Supper, persevered in united supplication. Many parted with their property to supply the wants of the poorer brethren; all were filled with joy and with gratitude to God; and converts were added daily to their number (42–47). So that with respect to these three thousand converts, there is not only evidence that they made a profession of repentance and faith, but that with respect to the great majority their repentance and faith were real. They were that day converted and saved.

It may be noticed that the Apostles baptized the three thousand converts the same day on which they first heard the gospel, when most of them were strangers to the members of the Church, and when it was impossible to test their sincerity. Was this consistent with the idea that baptism is meant only for believers? It was; for this was the day of the Lord's power. The preachers were "filled with the Holy Ghost" (4); the convictions of the multitude were deep and pungent (37); they testified much joy (41). They expected persecution, shame, loss, and death itself, as the consequence of their faith, and would not offer themselves to baptism without very strong belief and decided courage. Under these circumstances, the Apostles, without superna-

tural knowledge of other men's hearts, could discern the tokens of that sound conversion which so soon issued in remarkable piety and zeal.

It has been said, indeed, that they had no reason to expect persecution, since they had "favour with all the people" (47). But no one of them could expect to escape persecution. Jesus having been recently crucified as a blasphemer through the influence of the priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, these now found that they were charged by his disciples with the judicial murder of the Christ. It was impossible that they should tolerate a doctrine which was incompatible with their interests and scarcely consistent with their safety. They had persecuted Christ to death as an impostor and blasphemer, an enemy of their religion and country. Scarcely any of the rulers had believed on him, not a single priest, no a solitary Pharisee, had become his disciple; and in three thousand men out of perhaps five hundred thousand, assembled from all countries, now professed their faith in him, how could they expect anything from the priests and from the people but contempt and hatred? Events soon indicated the temper of the most powerful men in the nation. Within a few months, the Apostles were arrested for preaching Christ (Acts, iv. 1–3); shortly after they were again put into prison (Acts, v. 17), and were then beaten (40). After another short period, Stephen, one of the deacons of the church, was stoned to death as a blasphemer, amidst the execrations of the Sanhedrin (vii.) Again we read, "At that time there was

a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the Apostles. . . . As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison" (viii. 1–3); "and when they were put to death he gave his voice against them" (xxvi. 10). The conversion of Saul brought a short rest to the churches (ix. 31). But about A.D. 43, or ten years after the death of Christ, the Apostle James was martyred by Herod, who, because "he saw it pleased the Jews," determined to kill Peter also (xii. 1–3). To the members of the churches of Judea generally the Apostle Paul could say, "Call to remembrance the former days, in which ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock, both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used," Heb. x. 32, 33. What less had Jesus promised to his disciples when he uttered the following words?—"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake," Matt. x. 16, 17, 21, 22, 34–36. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are

not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. If they have persecuted me they will also persecute you," John, xv. 19, 20. The Apostles were too honest and too wise not to set all this before those to whom they preached. Indeed, no one needed warning. The reasons why the priests and Scribes should hate the doctrine of Christ were too obvious. The hatred itself was already too apparent. Hence few Jews would profess their belief in the doctrine of Christ without entire conviction of its truth and great earnestness. And of all these three thousand baptized persons the Apostles had good reason to think that the profession of repentance and faith was sincere.

Indeed they appear to have become eminently pious; if the diligent use of means, continued prayer, unparalleled generosity, ardent gratitude, and general joy, can prove it; and the indications of this earnest feeling must have been from the first apparent.

Baptism of the Samaritans.—Acts, viii. 5, 25.

When the members of the Church at Jerusalem were driven from their homes by persecution, they "went everywhere preaching the word," Acts, viii. 4. On that occasion, Philip, who had been chosen by the Church at Jerusalem one of its deacons, because he was "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" (Acts, v. 2–5), visited the city of Samaria[1]

[1] Which might be translated, a city of Samaria.—See John, iv. 5, Greek.

and there preached Christ, Acts, viii. 5. As his preaching was accompanied by miracles, the people listened earnestly, and were "filled with joy at what they saw and heard" (6-8). We know what he preached. A man full of the Holy Ghost preaching Christ to an attentive people, must have told them of their ruin by nature, of the love of God to mankind, of the atonement wrought out by Christ, of salvation by grace through faith to all that believe, of their need of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, of the hell which awaits unpardoned sinners, and of the heaven to which believers will be admitted. All this, with much more, he preached to them. When Paul preached among the Gentiles he simply preached Christ as Philip did (1 Cor. i. 23; ii. 2, 4), and the chief business of the Apostles was to be witnesses for Christ (Acts, i. 8); but the effect of this testimony was to be the conversion of multitudes (Acts, xxvi. 17, 18), and, in fact, numerous churches of saints were formed in many lands by this simple preaching of Christ. Numerous miracles proved the truth of the facts which Philip declared. Demoniacs were rescued from the power of the devil, paralytic persons received strength, and the lame were healed (6, 7). The circumstances at the time added greatly to the force of the testimony of Philip. Persecution was at this time raging; believers were arrested in their houses and hurried to prison (Acts, viii. 1-3); some were beaten, some compelled to blaspheme, some were killed (Acts, xxvi. 10, 11); and when, under these circum-

stances, he, being driven from Jerusalem, preached to the Samaritans, they listened (6), they received his word (14); and "when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (12).

Let us recollect how plainly salvation is in the New Testament annexed to faith: "As many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name," John, i. 12. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life," John, iii. 16. See also John, iii. 36; vi. 47; Acts, xiii. 39, 48; xvi. 31; Rom. i. 16; iii. 22; ix. 33; 2 Thess. i. 10; 1 John, v. 10. Let us remember, too, that a thorough belief of the facts and doctrines of the gospel implies saving faith in Christ, as is stated in scripture, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved," Rom. x. 9. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. . . . . Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" 1 John, v. 1, 5. Hence the expression in the text, "They believed Philip," who preached Christ, amounts to a declaration that they believed in Christ. To this it is added that "they received the word of God" (14). When the three thousand were converted at Pentecost, it is said "they gladly received the word of Peter."

Acts, ii. 41. When the Bereans received the word they believed, Acts, xvii. 11, 12. When Cornelius and his friends became true believers, it is said simply that "they received the word of God," Acts, xi. 1. When Paul wrote to the Thessalonians he said, "Ye became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word," 1 Thess. i. 6. And as it is said of the Samaritans that they also "received the word of God," we may infer that they likewise became followers of the Lord. Seeing, then, their earnestness, their reception of the gospel, and their joy, Philip could not doubt the sincerity of their profession, and baptized them as disciples of Christ. He judged rightly: the gift of the Holy Spirit, which speedily followed, was the proof of their sincerity, when the Apostles, Peter and John, "laid their hands on them they received the Holy Ghost" (17), and thus "God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost," Acts, xv. 8.

One of them, indeed, the sorcerer Simon, after his baptism, proved that he still retained bitter enmity to God and was the slave of sin (23); but, like the rest, he was baptized as a penitent believer (13). His offer of money to Peter, by which he hoped to buy the power of communicating miraculous gifts, proved that he was unconverted, but was no proof that he had made no profession of repentance and faith. From Philip he had certainly heard the great truths of the gospel (12, 13). He, therefore, believed, and professed to believe, the

corruption of man, his ruin by the fall, his need of a Saviour, the atonement made by the Son of God, regeneration by the Holy Spirit, the necessity of entire obedience to the law of God, the resurrection, and the future judgment. For some time after his baptism he continued with Philip, and had, therefore, many opportunities of hearing him. The miracles which he witnessed excited his attention (13) and, therefore, he must have listened to all that Philip said. He could not have been ignorant of the gospel at the time when he offered the money to Peter; that offer, therefore, is no proof that he was ignorant at the time of his baptism: and, as there is no other proof of it, we are entitled to conclude that at his baptism he made, like the rest, a credible profession of repentance and faith; and this was a sufficient reason for his being admitted by Philip to baptism.

If it be further objected, that as Simon is said to have believed, and yet he had no saving faith belief must mean something less than saving faith and that, therefore, the Samaritans may neither have experienced nor professed any more faith than that which was experienced and professed by Simon. answer, that since it is said of the gift of the Spirit to Cornelius and his friends, "God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost" (Acts, xv. 8), the gift of the Spirit to the Samaritans was likewise a testimony from God to their sincerity. And whether it was so or not, we are entitled to believe that they made a credible pro

fession of saving faith. For, since salvation is so distinctly and repeatedly attached in scripture to faith, and the true disciples of Christ are constantly termed believers whenever we meet with these terms in the New Testament, we must understand them to mean true and saving faith, unless the contrary is expressed or may be clearly proved from the context. It is certain that Philip placed before them the great truths of the gospel; it is certain that they believed them and received them; they, therefore, made a profession of faith in Christ. That profession was credible, because they made it when the Church was undergoing a furious persecution, and the subsequent gift of the Holy Spirit to them is an evidence that their profession was true.

Baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch.—Acts, viii. 26–39.

This eunuch was a worshipper of God, who had taken a long and expensive journey to attend a religious festival at Jerusalem (27). He was in possession of the book of the prophet Isaiah; and, as he travelled in his chariot, was reading the prediction of our Saviour contained in the fifty-third chapter of that book (28, 32, 33). At this moment he was joined by Philip, who was first directed by an angel to enter the wilderness between Jerusalem and Gaza; and, secondly, was directed by the Spirit to approach the chariot (29). Invited to sit beside him in the chariot, Philip, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, expounded to him the prophecy which he had been reading, and "preached unto him Jesus" (30, 35);

that is, he declared to him the incarnation, the lif
the miracles, the doctrine, the death, the resurre
tion, the ascension, the reign, and the future adve
of Jesus. In substance, at least, he told him t
words of Christ, "God so loved the world that
gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believe
in him should not perish, but have everlasting life
That Philip taught the eunuch all this, and mu
more, is certain, first, from the statement, that "
preached unto him Jesus;" and, second, from t
desire which Philip, as a man full of the Holy Gho
felt to save his soul. And when, on approaching
pool of water, he said, "See, here is water. Wh
doth hinder me to be immersed?" How cou
Philip hesitate to comply with his request? H
could he doubt that he was a real believer?

1. Philip had been sent to him by special revelati
(26, 29). Why was this, if God did not design
convert him by his grace, if, indeed, he was
already converted? 2. Philip found him readi
the word of God (28), a fact which alone betoken
great seriousness of mind. 3. Philip found that
had just taken a long and expensive journey fr
the heart of Ethiopia to worship God at Jerusale
according to the law of God (27; Exod. xxiii. 1
having renounced the idols of his country, whi
were sacrifices which no one would make who w
not actuated by strong religious feelings. 4. Wh
Philip "preached to him Jesus," explaining to h
the way of salvation, he immediately desired to
baptized as a disciple of Christ. Now, either he h

learned something about Jesus at Jerusalem or not: if not, then Philip must have explained the nature of baptism, for else he could not have wished for it; and in that case he deliberately consecrated himself to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit: but if he had a previous knowledge of Christ and of Christians, then he was aware of the fierce persecution of Christians at Jerusalem, and desired baptism when he knew that it would expose him to the hatred of all his co-religionists. 5. When he was baptized he manifested joy (39): now baptism alone could not occasion this; it was, therefore, the joy arising from a discovery of the way of salvation. See Acts, ii. 46, 47; viii. 8; xiii. 52, &c. &c. And this joy must have been as apparent before his baptism as after it. And what could cause this but faith? When Philip considered all these things, he could not but conclude that he was a true believer, and that God had sent him to him for the express purpose of bringing him to faith in Christ. In his own country of Ethiopia, where there were no Christians, he could not obtain baptism, and as an open expression of faith before his servants would honour Christ and strengthen his faith, Philip could not hesitate to baptize him as a believer in Jesus.

Baptism of Paul.—Acts, ix. 1–20; xx. 1–16.

When upon being struck to the earth and blinded by the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, Paul, "trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" his self-will

was subdued, Acts, ix. 6. Notwithstanding that our Lord graciously declared his purpose to make him his missionary to the Gentiles (xxvi. 16–18), he was so agitated that for three days he could neither eat nor drink (ix. 9). Unable, apparently, to obtain a sense of pardon, but yet incapable of despair, he continued during those days to pray (ix. 11). While he was so engaged our Lord directed Ananias, a disciple of Damascus, to visit him (10, 11), who, entering his room, said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost, and immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales. And he received sight forthwith" (17, 18). Ananias now continued, "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (xxii. 14–16). "And he arose and was baptized" (ix. 18); "and straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues that he is the Son of God" (ix. 20). It was then that Jesus was revealed to his soul that he might preach in his name, Gal. i. 16. His subjection to Christ (6), his persevering prayer (11), his reception of the Holy Ghost (17), his immediate renunciation of the world, and his entrance on a ministry entailing poverty, opposition, pain, and

erhaps death, prove that he was then converted. nd Ananias had reason to conclude this, for he had eard from Christ himself that Paul was "a chosen essel" (ix. 15). He had been sent by Jesus to com- nunicate the Holy Spirit to him; he witnessed in im those humble and earnest feelings which his ontinual prayer had manifested; and when he saw hat his sight was restored, and that the gifts of the Holy Spirit were communicated to him (ix. 17, 18) e could not hesitate to baptize him as a penitent eliever.

It has been argued that Ananias could not con- ider him to be a believer because he said, "Arise, nd wash away thy sins" (xxii. 16). But as con- ession must follow faith, and yet is said to save Rom. x. 9, 10), so baptism may follow faith, and et be said to wash away sins. In both cases it s the faith itself which justifies. In the one case onfession is spoken of as the expression of saving aith, in the other case baptism is spoken of as its xpression. In the one case the Apostle declares, irtually, that faith saves when it makes a man con- ess Christ; in the other Ananias intimated that it ould save when it led to the particular mode of onfessing Christ, viz. baptism. For, as Mr. Poole ays, "Where true faith is together with profession f it by baptism, there is salvation promised."— *Poole* on Mark, xvi. 16.

Baptism of Cornelius.—Acts, x. 1–48.

That Cornelius was a believer at the time of his

baptism is, I think, apparent from the narrative. He was, it is said, εὐσεβὴς καὶ φοβούμενος τὸν Θεὸν, "a devout man and one that feared God," and all his household had the same character, Acts, x. 2. By this term, εὐσεβὴς, devout, the piety of Ananias of Damascus was expressed, Acts, xxii. 12. By this term the children of God generally are designated by Peter, 2 Peter, ii. 9. One great end of redemption is said by Paul to be to make men εὐσεβεῖς godly, Titus, ii. 12. Cornelius was, therefore, a godly man. The expression "to fear God" means to have supreme reverence and regard to him, as we may judge from the following passages: "His mercy is on them that fear him throughout all generations," Luke, i. 50. "Servants obey in all things your masters . . . in singleness of heart fearing God," Col. iii. 22. "Let us cleanse ourselves, perfecting holiness in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1, &c. Cornelius, therefore, and his household who feared God, were the servants and children of God, and were, therefore, accepted by him, Acts, x. 35. There is reason to think the same of his "kinsmen and near friends" (24) who all met to hear the word of God (33). Upon them all, after that they had heard the gospel preached unto them, the Holy Ghost was poured out (44), and in foreign languages magnified God (46). The "God which knows the hearts bare them witness giving them the Holy Ghost, . . . purifying their hearts by faith," Acts, xv. 8, 9. And when the church at Jerusalem, instructed by Apostles, heard

these facts, "they glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life," Acts, xi. 18. This, it is clear from the narrative, the Apostle understood. They were penitent believers, the Apostle knew them to be so, and as such he baptized them.

Baptism of Lydia and of her Household.—Acts, xvi. 11–15.

Lydia and her household were baptized by Paul as believers.

Lydia was a pious person at the time of her baptism. For she was a worshipper of God (14); she listened attentively to the preaching of Paul (14); she did so because the Lord "opened her heart" to receive the truth; and at her baptism she made a distinct profession of faith, asking Paul and his companions to become her guests if they judged her to be πιστὴ, a believer (15).

And Paul had reason to think that she was a believer. For when the Lord opened her heart to receive the gospel in reality, her conversation would soon show both her knowledge of it and her hearty reception of it. Immediately after her baptism she invited the evangelists to become her guests, if they considered her faithful, that is, a true believer; for so the word πιστὴ means, Acts, xvi. 1; 2 Tim. i. 5; Eph. i. 1; Col. i. 2, 7; iv. 7, 9; 1 Tim. i. 12. And their acceptance of the invitation, made upon that express condition, shows that they did then consider her to be a believer. But if so they must have

considered her so before her baptism, since that ceremony could not effect the change. It is therefore apparent that she was baptized as a penitent believer.

Of the members of her family nothing is said, but from the practice of the Apostles in other cases we may judge that they also had professed their faith; and no less than their mistress were baptized as believers; as Cornelius "feared God with all his house" (Acts, x. 2), as the nobleman at Capernaum believed "and his whole house" (John, iv. 33), as the jailor at Philippi "rejoiced, believing with all his house" (Acts, xvi. 34), and as Crispus of Corinth "believed in the Lord with all his house" (Acts, xviii. 8), so it appears from the fact of their baptism, that Lydia believed with all her house; and, like all others, they were baptized on a profession of their faith.

The Baptism of the Jailor of Philippi.—Acts, xvi. 22–34.

The jailor had treated Paul and Silas with unnecessary harshness; for he thrust them into the inner prison, fastened them in the stocks, and there left them to bear their pain and hunger unpitied, when he might have easily learned their innocence, and when, without any violation of his duty, he might, as he afterwards did, have treated them kindly, dressing their wounds and offering them food. When therefore, the earthquake in conjunction with their Christian conduct convinced him that they were the servants of God to whom he had acted with cruelty

he was afraid of the immediate vengeance of God (29, 30). But when they said to him, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," and then explained the gospel more fully to him, "He was transported with joy, ἠγαλλιάσατο, believing in God" (31, 34). The word used expresses the joy of faith experienced by the Christians of Asia Minor, to whom Peter, speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, said, "In whom ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, ye greatly rejoice." "In whom believing ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory," 1 Pet. i. 6, 8. No man could so rejoice in Christ without faith; and faith is said to have been the cause of his joy; "He rejoiced believing in God." There seems to me no force in the objection that his joy and his faith are named subsequently to his baptism; because the water could effect no change in his views. Without trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and without the assurance of the pardon of his sins, how could immersion fill him with joy? He was immersed because he believed in Christ, and rejoiced because he was thus allowed to profess his faith. His open and instant confession of Christ might increase his joy, but its only intelligible source is, that he, as a guilty sinner, felt himself to be pardoned, and that joy was the same before baptism as after.

It is apparent also that Paul thought him to be a believer. His extreme terror was apparent in his agitated looks, his frantic gestures, and his earnest words, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (27–30.) Paul necessarily saw how eagerly he welcomed the

doctrine of salvation by grace through faith. The immense change from terror to exultation effected by faith was equally visible; and when in place of his former cruelty he now treated them with brotherly kindness, how could the Apostle, who was so much accustomed to the sudden conversions effected by divine grace, doubt that the Spirit of God had changed his heart? How could he refuse to baptize him as a penitent believer?

It is no less certain that his household believed also. For they likewise, excited by the earthquake and by the other circumstances of that eventful night, listened to the words of these wonderful prisoners (32); the change wrought in the head of the family must have acted powerfully on their minds, and the narrative expressly declares, ἠγαλλιάσατο πανοικὶ πεπιστευκὼς τῷ Θεῷ, "he exulted, having believed in God with all his house" (34). These words express the faith of the household, whether we understand them to mean that he rejoiced together with all his house, or that he believed together with them. For if he believed together with them, their faith was like his; and if he exulted together with them, then, like him, they possessed the vehement joy of faith.[1]

[1] See Acts, ii. 46; Jude, 24. It makes little difference whether πανοικὶ be construed with ἠγαλλιάσατο, or with πεπιστευκὼς; but it is generally construed with the latter.

"The jailor is said to have believed in God with all his house, *i. e.* with all his family to have accepted and approved the Christian doctrine. Custos carceris, πανοικὶ πεπιστευκὼς τῷ Θεῷ, dicitur, *i. e.* cum totâ suâ familiâ accepisse et probasse doctrinam Christianam."—*Schleusner*. "He exulted because with all his house he had

The Baptism of the Corinthians.—Acts, xviii. 8.

Of the formation of the Corinthian church we read, "Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized." Since our Lord has said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark, xvi. 16), and these Corinthians "believed and were baptized," they were therefore saved. There is no more reason to give the lowest sense to the word "believed" in this narrative than there is to give it to the same word in Mark, xvi.; and, therefore, there is no reason to doubt that these persons were true believers before baptism.

The Baptism of twelve Ephesians.—Acts, xix. 1–7.

These Ephesians were also baptized as believers. When Paul came to Ephesus, he found, it is said, twelve "disciples." As believers alone are called disciples in the New Testament, and as the Apostle thought that they were believers in Christ (2), these must have been men of a religious character: and as they were, in fact, disciples of John, from whom they had received baptism many years before, it is evident that they had been baptized unto repentance for the

believed in God. Exultavit quod cum totâ domo credidisset Deo."—*Stephen.* "On this account he rejoiced, that not on himself alone, but on his whole family such light had been poured. Ideo gavisus est quod, non ipse tantum, sed tota ejus familia tantâ luce perfusa esset."—*Grotius.*

remission of sins (Mark, i. 4), that they had repented unto life (Matt. iii. 2, 6), and that after the lapse of so many years they were living as pious persons. Although they were looking for the immediate advent of the Messiah (Matt. iii. 2), and knew that he would baptize his followers in the Holy Ghost (Matt. iii. 11), yet, being far from Judea, they had neither known the particulars of the life of Jesus, nor had they heard of the gift of the Holy Ghost to the churches in consequence of his exaltation. But when Paul reminded them that John had announced a Saviour to come after him (4), and then explained to them the claims of Jesus (4), they were baptized εἰς τὸ ὄνομα, "unto the name of the Lord Jesus," and immediately received the Holy Spirit (5, 6). Since thus "God who knoweth the hearts bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost" (Acts, xv. 8), we may infer not only that they were then believers before that they were thus "sealed by the Spirit" (Eph. i. 13), but also that Paul had good grounds from their life, and from their conversation with him, to judge them to be so, and as such baptized them.

These being all the instances of baptism recorded in the New Testament, it appears that all the persons of whose baptism there is any inspired narrative were persons who were professed believers in Christ. There is no except case.

The evidence of this fact seems to me so clear and precise, that no imaginations can be received in opposition to it. Nevertheless, as these are much

insisted on, let us examine their amount and worth. It has been said, that these persons were generally baptized at once; many of them on the first day that they heard the gospel; that no tests of character were applied, no testimonials were asked, and no delay suggested; that ministers baptized without any consent of churches; and that they were therefore baptized, not as believers, but as catechumens. I answer, that since the inspired word declares that they were believers, all these objections cannot disprove it.

But the objections themselves seem to me weak. In the circumstances in which these converts were placed, sudden conversions were to be expected. To the truth of the sudden conversion both of Zaccheus and of the crucified thief our Lord bore testimony (Luke, xix. 9; xxiii. 43); and of Paul's sudden conversion to be a faithful apostle there can be no doubt, Acts, ix. 20. Why, then, should not other conversions be sudden? The preachers were, in most of the cases, inspired and fervent; they had made great sacrifices for the truth; the miracles which they wrought were impressive: their doctrine could not be doubted; and if that doctrine was true, men were bound to trust and serve Christ at once. Under such circumstances, to change their views, feelings, and habits at once, was sobriety; to delay the change, was infatuation.

If no testimonials of character were asked, and no delay of baptism suggested, neither of these were necessary. The converts embraced shame, persecu-

tion, loss, and hardship, when they received the gospel: none but earnest men were then likely to profess their reception of it; and neither ministers nor churches were authorized to demand any other qualifications in the converts than the external indications of conversion—a hearty reception of the doctrine of Christ and a cheerful subjection to his yoke.

If the converts were sometimes baptized without the sanction of the churches, this was in every case apparently when there were no churches which could sanction them. In the case of the three thousand at Jerusalem, nearly the whole church apparently were engaged in baptizing the converts. The Samaritans, the Eunuch, Cornelius, Lydia, the jailor, the Corinthians, and the Ephesians, were baptized when there was no church in the place. The baptized were themselves the first members of the churches to which they afterwards belonged.

Now, since all the persons baptized by the Apostles and their contemporaries were, according to the only records which we possess, believers, what right have we to baptize any others? The baptism of a believer is a spontaneous profession of faith; the baptism of any other class is something essentially different; and how can we innocently add to Christ's institution something essentially different? His commission declares that believers are to be baptized; the books of the New Testament record the baptism of none but believers; where, then, is the precept or the precedent for something totally distinct, the

baptism of catechumens or of infants? If you baptize these, baptize also heathens. Why do you reject heathens from baptism, but because you have no precept or precedent to authorize their baptism? And since you are equally without both precept and precedent for the baptism of infants, rescue them also from the disadvantage of an unauthorized and deceptive rite, which, by making them Christians in name, may hinder them from being Christians in reality.

VI.—The Nature and Effects of Baptism, as declared in the New Testament.

We have already seen proof that believers alone ought to be baptized from the terms of the commission in Matt. xxviii., and from the fact that they alone are declared to have been baptized by Apostles and their contemporaries. We may see further proof of this truth from other statements of the New Testament respecting the nature and effects of baptism.

The passages which I wish to examine on this subject are the following:—

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born ἄνωθεν, from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."—John, iii. 3, 5.

"Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."—Acts, ii. 38.

"Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord."—Acts, ii. 16.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized unto Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been σύμφυτοι,[1] associated, connected in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."—Rom. vi. 3–6.

"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized unto Christ have put on Christ. . . . In whom, also, ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."—Gal. iii. 26, 27; Col. ii. 11, 12.

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the

[1] "Σύμφυτος, planted together, connected together."—*Stuart.* From "Συμφύομαι, to be necessarily connected."—*Liddell.* "Σύμφυτος, grown together into one, conjoined, united."—*Robinson.*

washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."—Tit. iii. 5.

"The antitype to which, ᾧ ἀντίτυπον, baptism, doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεὸν, the petition unto God, or the seeking after God, of a good conscience."—1 Pet. iii. 21.

Any person attentively reading these passages without a previous bias, would, I think, be at once disposed to think that faith must precede baptism; and this is made plainer by a closer examination of their meaning.

John, iii. 3, 5.—"*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born* ἄνωθεν, *from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*"

The word ἄνωθεν, usually translated "again," in this place does not mean again, but "from above." See verse 31; xix. 11; James, i. 17; iii. 15, 17. It has not the sense of "again" in the lexicons, nor in the Septuagint, nor in the New Testament, if we except, perhaps, one doubtful passage, Gal. iv. 9; but it constantly means "from above." "To be born from above" is the same thing as "to be born of water and of the Spirit," in the 5th verse, both describing the same new birth, because the 5th verse is our Lord's explanation of the 3d verse, in answer to the question of Nicodemus. Let us examine then, first, the nature of this new birth; and, secondly, its necessity.

1. *The Nature of the New Birth.*—To be born from above (verse 3), to be born of God (John, i. 13; 1 John, iii. 9), to become sons of God (John, i. 12; Rom. viii. 14), to be born of the Spirit (John, iii. 6, 8), to be born of water and of the Spirit (5), to be born again (1 Pet. i. 23), and to be regenerate (Tit. iii. 5), are all phrases which express the same thing. For to be born from above must be to be born of God, who is above; to be born of God is to be a son of God; to be born of God is to be born of the Spirit, who is God; to be born of the Spirit must be the same thing as to be born of water and of the Spirit, since the Spirit does not accomplish two births from above; and this birth of water and of the Spirit must be the new birth, or regeneration, because this spiritual birth is a new birth, and there is no other new birth which men experience.

This new birth is effected by God through his word, James, i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23. It is effected through faith, John, i. 12; Gal. iii. 26; 1 John, v. 1. The effects and proofs of it are love to God and man, 1 John, iv. 7; holy obedience, Rom. viii 14; 1 John, ii. 29; iii. 9, 10; v. 18; and a filial spirit, Rom. viii. 15, 16. Those, therefore, who through the influence of the scriptures believe in Christ, love God and man, obey the commands of God, and feel towards God as children towards a parent, are born of the Spirit.

But our Lord here says that water has some connection with this change. Each is to be born of water and of the Spirit. Now, since the Jews baptized

their proselytes, and called the baptized persons new-born, of which Nicodemus was aware, since John had baptized many disciples, and the disciples of Jesus themselves also baptized converts in water—by water in this place, there is reason to think that Jesus meant, not the influence of the Spirit, but the water of baptism. There is no other place in scripture in which regeneration by the Spirit is called a birth by water; and this passage is unlike Matt. iii. 11, where the baptism in the Spirit is termed "a baptism in fire," because here the word "water" is not put after the word "Spirit," as though to explain the spiritual baptism, but before it, as though to express something distinct though associated. Calvin, Bullinger, Grotius, Poole, Lampe, and Gill, deny the reference of the passage to baptism; Beza, Baxter, Benson, Scott, Barnes, Bengel, and others, maintain that reference; and they are probably right. But if our Lord here referred to baptism, then he declared that a man is born from above by the Spirit and by baptism. How is this to be understood? Does the Spirit effect the regeneration of a person by the water of baptism? Many think so. "In baptism," says a respectable writer of our day, "two very different causes are combined,—the one, God himself; the other, a creature which he has thought it to hallow for this end. . . . This regeneration is the being born of water and of the Spirit, or by God's Spirit again moving on the face of the waters, and sanctifying them for our cleansing; and cleansing is thereby."—*Tract* 67, pp. 13, 19. But the idea is

wholly contrary to scripture, which declares that men are regenerated by the word of God (James, i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23; John, i. 12, 13; Gal. iii. 26; Eph. v. 26); and as distinctly refuted by facts, since their ungodly lives prove numbers of baptized persons to remain unregenerate. The expression cannot mean that men must be made catechumens by baptism, and afterwards be born of the Spirit, because these two things are so distinct and separate that they cannot both be called one new birth, one birth from above. But as regeneration takes place when a man receives faith from God, and baptism is the expression of faith which necessarily follows, a person who does not possess faith has no faith and is not regenerate; and baptism, as the outward sign of faith or regeneration, may thus be rightly connected with it in language. The work of the Spirit makes a man a new creature, and baptism is the manifestation of the change. The Spirit alone renews the mind, the will, and the affections, changing pride into humility, self-righteousness into contrition, unbelief into faith, enmity into love, worldliness into spirituality of mind, slavery to sin into the love of duty and the habit of obedience, Eph. ii. 4, 5, 10. Profession alone is wanting to complete the change. And when a person who has received spiritual life manifests it by confessing Christ before men by immersion, then he is born of water and of the Spirit, his new birth is complete. He has received new life, and his new life is manifested to the world.

2. *The Necessity of the New Birth.*—All enlightened

persons own the necessity of a great moral change to be effected by the Spirit of God; but why is baptism a necessary adjunct? The moral change is not effected by baptism, but before it, as we know from scripture and from indubitable facts; but why then is baptism so necessary that Jesus could say, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God?" The answer is obvious. Baptism is the profession of faith, the public confession of Christ, without which confession there is no true faith and no salvation. So Jesus has himself pronounced, Matt. x. 32, 33; see also Rom. x. 8–10; Rev. xxi. 8. And as the confession of Christ is necessary to salvation, so is baptism to those who know that this is the appointed method of confessing him.

"It is not another kind of faith, but that same which in the sincere is saving which is required to be professed in baptism."—*Baxter.*

"It is most certain that a profession of faith and repentance was ordinarily required before the baptism of adult persons. . . . Where true faith is together with the profession of it by baptism there is salvation promised, Mark, xvi. 16."—*Poole,* Matt. iii. 6; Acts, xxii. 16.

"The necessity of regeneration in the first place, and then of baptism, is here confirmed."—*Bengel.*

"Unless a man has a new nature given him by the Spirit, which is being born of the Spirit, and publicly receive the Christian religion when offered to him (Matt. x. 33), which is being

born of water, he cannot be a subject of God's kingdom here, nor have a share in his glory hereafter. . . . As the washing of the body with water in baptism fitly represents the purification of the soul, this ceremony is very properly made the rite by which we publicly take upon ourselves the profession of the Christian religion : wherefore the receiving of this rite is necessary in all cases where it may be had; the confessing of Christ being often as necessary as believing in him."—*Benson.*

"Baptism in the ordinary course of things is requisite to the outward profession of Christianity."—*Scott.*

"Jesus meant undoubtedly to be understood as affirming that this was to be the regular and uniform way of entering into his Church, that this was the appropriate mode of making a profession of religion . . . It is the duty of every one not only to love the Saviour, but to make an acknowledgment of that love by being baptized and devoted to his service. . . He cannot enter into the true Church here or in the world to come except in connection with a change of heart, and by the proper expression of that change in the ordinances appointed by the Saviour."—*Barnes*

Acts, ii. 38.—"*Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*"

Repentance includes the confession of our sins, sorrow for them, and turning away from them.

"Repentance implies sorrow for sin as committed

against God with a purpose to forsake it. It is not merely a fear of the consequences, nor of the wrath of God in hell; it is such a view of sin, as evil in itself, as to lead the mind to hate it and forsake it." —*Barnes*. It is connected with conversion, Acts, iii. 19; xxvi. 20. It leads to faith, Mark, i. 15; John, xvi. 9; Acts, xx. 21; 2 Tim. ii. 25. It secures forgiveness, Matt. v. 3; Luke, iii. 3; xv. 7, 17–20; xviii. 13, 14; xxiv. 47; Acts, v. 31; xi. 18; 2 Cor. vii. 10; 1 John, i. 9. Those who repent of ungodliness become godly, those who repent of unbelief believe, those who repent of sin obey; and therefore the repentant are forgiven.[1]

"The Jews were called by Peter to repent first, and then to be baptized. His language was, 'Firmly believe the doctrine of Christ, and submit to his grace and government; and make an open, solemn profession of this, and come under an engagement to abide by it by submitting to the ordinance of baptism.'"—*Henry*.

"The direction which Christ gave his Apostles was that they should baptize all who believed, Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark, xvi. 16. The Jews had not been baptized, and a baptism now would be a profession of the religion of Christ, or a declaration made before the world that they embraced Jesus as their Messiah. It was equivalent to saying, that they should publicly and professedly embrace Jesus Christ

[1] *Repent*. "Μετανοήσατε, μετανοέω, to change one's opinion, to repent; μετάνοια, a change of mind on reflection, repentance."—*Liddell*.

as their Saviour. The gospel requires such a conviction, and no one is at liberty to withhold it. And a similar declaration is to be made to all who are inquiring the way to life. They are to exercise repentance, and then, without any unnecessary delay, to evince it in the ordinances of the gospel. If men are unwilling to profess religion, they have none; if they will not in the proper way show that they are truly attached to Christ, it is proof that they have no such attachment. . . . He who comes to be baptized comes with a professed conviction that he is a sinner, that there is no other way of mercy but in in the gospel, and with a professed willingness to comply with the terms of salvation, and receive it as it is offered through Jesus Christ."—*Barnes*.

Such repentance, then, as implies faith and secures pardon is to precede baptism, and therefore believers alone ought to be baptized.

II. The Jews were here exhorted to repent and to be baptized for the remission of sins. They were not to expect the remission of their sins through baptism without previous repentance, nor through repentance without baptism, but through repentance and baptism. If baptism regenerates the person, then how could a previous repentance be necessary? If baptism is to be administered to all serious applicants, then why were these Jews required first to repent? And why in this case is remission of sins so connected with baptism? We do not read in the word of God, Repent and be just, Repent and give alms for the remission of sins, but only, "Repent

and believe;" "Repent, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out," Mark, i. 5; Acts, iii. 19. But if baptism be simply a profession of repentance and faith, then the expression, "Repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins," is equivalent to "Repent and believe for the remission of sins." Remission of sins attends baptism simply because it attends faith. The baptism of the three thousand was an act of saving faith in them, an act which was necessary to salvation (Matt. x. 32; Rom. x. 9, 10), and which secured it. "It is not enough to believe in Christ, but we must also profess our Christianity, which it is the will of Christ that we should do by baptism. He who does these things is assured of the remission of his sins."[1] Since, then, baptism is thus necessary to remission of sins, and is so closely connected with it as no mere acts of obedience ever are, baptism must be a profession of faith, and none but believers ought to be baptized.

III. Repentance and baptism are declared in the text to secure the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit alone gives repentance and faith (John, i. 12, 13; vi. 44; Acts, ii. 47; xviii. 27; 1 Cor. iii. 5; xii. 3; Gal. v. 22; Eph. ii. 4, 5, 8; James, i. 18); and as baptism ought to follow repentance, baptism ought to follow the gift of the Holy Spirit: but here larger communications of grace were in-

[1] "Non satis est Christo credere, sed oportet et Christianismum profiteri (Rom. x. 10), quod Christus per baptismum fieri voluit. Qui hæc præstat certus fit de remissione peccatorum." —*Grotius.*

tended, such as were promised by Jesus to his Apostles before his death (John, xiv. 16; xvi. 7), and to all believers, John, vii. 38, 39. These were not miraculous gifts alone, but the Spirit himself with all his saving influences (1 Cor. vi. 19; Rom. viii. 9), for it was the gift promised to all the elect in all the world, Acts, ii. 39; Joel, ii. 28. And multitudes of these have never received miraculous gifts. This gift of the Spirit enlightens (2 Cor. iii. 17), sanctifies (Rom. v. 5; viii. 1), is the seal of a believer's adoption (Eph. i. 13; 1 John, iv. 13; Acts, xv. 8; Eph. iv. 30; 2 Cor. i. 22), and the earnest of his celestial inheritance, Eph. i. 14; 2 Cor. v. 5. It was promised by the Almighty to his Church through the prophets (Isa. lix. 21; Ezek. xxxvi. 27); and it is limited to believers, John, xiv. 17; Acts, v. 32; Rom. viii. 9; Gal. iii. 2; Eph. i. 13. This was expressed by the Apostle Peter, who limited the promise to "the called" (Acts, ii. 39): for those called are not those invited by the gospel, but the elect of God who are called by his grace, Rom. i. 6, 7; viii. 30; 1 Cor. i. 24; Eph. i. 13; Gal. iii. 2; 2 Pet. i. 10; Jude, 1. Yet while this gift is limited to believers, it is given to all who are rightly baptized; for the Apostle distinctly said that they all should receive it if they repented and were baptized, Acts, ii. 38. And the baptized did generally in the apostolic era of the Church receive it (Acts, viii. 17; xix. 6; 1 Cor. xii. 7, 11; xiv. 26; Gal. iii. 2, 5; Eph. i. 13; Heb. vi. 4–9); and it was God's testimony to them (Acts,

xv. 8), and proved their repentance to life, Acts, xi. 18. But as the gift of the Holy Spirit is limited to believers, and yet generally followed baptism in the time of the Apostles, it follows that none except professed believers, and few except real believers, were then baptized. On the whole this text declares that believers alone ought to be baptized; 1. Because it demands a change of heart and life before baptism; 2. Because it connects baptism with the remission of sins; 3. Because it declares that repentance and baptism secure the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts, xxii. 16.—"*And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*"

Paul was at this time deeply convinced of sin; his pride and self-will completely subdued (Acts, ix. 6), he continually cried to God for mercy (Acts, ix. 11); but he now felt that the law sentenced him to death (Rom. vii. 9, 10), and was so agitated that for three days he could neither eat nor drink, Acts, ix. 9. To him, thus oppressed with guilt, Ananias, who was sent by Jesus, used the words of the text; in which he exhorted him to do two things at once, to call on the name of Jesus and to be baptized, upon which his guilt would be washed away. 1. By the Lord, Ananias meant Jesus. See verses 10, 19, 21; ix. 6, 10, 11, 15, 17; Rom. xiv. 6-9, &c. To call on the name of the Lord is to pray to him as God, Gen. iv. 26; 1 Kings, xviii. 24; 2 Kings, v. 11;

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Psalm cxvi. 17; Acts, vii. 59. It is therefore to come to him in faith; and it is connected with salvation, Joel, ii. 32; Rom. x. 12, 13; John, vi. 39; Matt. xi. 28. All who truly call upon him are his disciples, Acts, ix. 14, 21; 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 22. And when Ananias exhorted Paul to call upon the name of Jesus, he exhorted him to exercise faith in him. 2. He exhorted him to be baptized, in presence doubtless of the household, as a public profession of his faith; upon which two things, the exercise of faith and the profession of it by baptism, his sins would be washed away. "Baptism administered to real penitents was intended to be both a mean and a seal of pardon; nor did God ordinarily in the primitive church bestow this on any person till he submitted to baptism."—*Benson.* "The remission of sins is promised to faith, and to the profession of faith by baptism, conjoined, Mark, xvi. 16."—*Grotius.* "As washing causeth the spots to disappear, so does pardoning mercy, or remission of sins, which accompanieth baptism in the due receiver. Matt. iii. 11; 1 Pet. iii. 21, 22. Where true faith is, together with the profession of it by baptism, there is salvation promised."—*Poole.* This truth is expressed alike by this text, by Mark, xvi. 16, by Acts, ii. 38, and by John, iii. 5, for all declare that men are saved by faith manifested in the confession of Christ, and cannot be saved without it. And it follows equally from each of them that none but believers can properly be baptized.

Rom. vi. 3-6.—"*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized unto Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*"

"Know ye not that when men are baptized they are by vow, covenant, and profession, listed into the belief of a crucified Saviour, who died for sin to save us from it: and do profess that repentance by which we renounce it, as dead to it for the time to come? Therefore in our baptism we are dipped under the water, as signifying our covenant profession; that as he was buried for sin, we are dead and buried to sin, that as the glorious power of God raised him from the dead, so we should rise up to live to him in newness and holiness of life."—*Baxter.*

"All who had been baptized unto the name and religion of Jesus had received the sign and made the profession of communion with him, and conformity to him in his death, that in virtue of his dying for their sins, they should die to all sin. This profession was equivalent to being buried with Christ, as dead with him. The baptism of a converted Jew or Gentile was a professed manifestation of his death to

sin, and it was a professed introduction to his walking in newness of life."—*Scott.*

"We by being baptized into his death are conceived to have made a similar translation; in the act of descending under the water of baptism to have resigned an old life, and in the act of ascending to emerge into a second, or new life."—*Chalmers.*

"The act of baptism denotes dedication to the service of him in whose name we are baptized. One of its designs is to dedicate or consecrate us to the service of Christ. Thus (1 Cor. x. 2) the Israelites are said to have been baptized unto Moses, *i. e.* they became consecrated, or dedicated, or bound to him as their leader and lawgiver. In the place before us, the argument of the Apostle is evidently drawn from the supposition that we have been solemnly consecrated by baptism to the service of Christ. By the solemn profession made at our baptism we had become dead to sin, as Christ was dead to the living world around him when he was buried; as he rose from death, so we, being made dead to sin and the world by that religion whose profession is expressed by baptism, should rise to a new life, a life of holiness."—*Barnes.*

"To be baptized unto Christ (*in Christum*) is beyond doubt to be baptized unto this, that each should profess his communion with Christ; that each by that baptism, as by a sign and testimony, should avow that he had believed in Christ."—*Vitringa, Obs. Sac.* iii. 22, 822.

"The sense is . . . . as many of us as have been devoted to Christ by baptism."—*Stuart.*

"As the mean by which a union takes place with Christ is faith, and the mean of professing that faith, of sealing our union with Christ, is baptism, Paul employs the expression, '*to be baptized unto Christ,*' as equivalent to this, '*to be united to Christ.*' To be baptized unto Christ in the style of Paul, does not designate a simple external profession of the religion of the gospel, but the act of heart by which one accepts that religion, an act of which submission to the rite of baptism was the public and ordained expression. In all this passage, as in Gal. iii. 27, baptism is taken for the acceptance of Christ, an act of which that ceremony was the prescribed profession."—*Hodge, French Transation.*

From this passage it is plain that believers alone ought to be baptized; 1. Because the baptized are said to be consecrated to Christ by baptism, which is true of none but believers. 2. Because the baptized die to sin and rise to a new life, which none do but true believers. As the baptized are said to die and to rise again, the passage cannot mean that baptism is merely emblematic of what they ought to do. Its expressing what they ought to do would not prove that they did it. Either, then, the baptized persons really died and rose again in a spiritual sense in baptism, and then they were real believers; or else they died and rose again professedly, and then they were professed believers. Either sense proves that, according to this text, none but true

believers ought to offer themselves for baptism; and none but those who make a credible profession of faith ought to be received to baptism.

Gal. iii. 26, 27.—"*Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized unto Christ have put on Christ.*"

"To put on Christ" is to be clothed, as it were, in Christ, to have Christ alone seen in us, and it includes two things: 1. To imitate the example of Christ, Rom. xiii. 14; Eph. iv. 24; vi. 11; Col. iii. 10, 12; 1 Pet. v. 5. 2. To trust in the righteousness of Christ, which is to be, as it were, clothed in his righteousness, to receive the wedding garment (Matt. xxii. 11), the white robes of the redeemed, Rev. vii. 9, 14. It is to receive Christ as our righteousness (1 Cor. i. 30), and to "be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. v. 21. "To put on Christ may be understood legally and evangelically. Legally. Rom. xiii.—'Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,' *i. e.* imitate the example and the virtues of Christ. But to put on Christ evangelically is not a matter of imitation, but of a new birth and creation. To put on Christ evangelically is not to put on the law and works, but an inestimable gift, namely, the remission of sins, righteousness, peace, consolation, joy in the Holy Spirit, salvation, life, and Christ himself."—*Luther.*

"He uses the similitude of a robe when he says, that the Galatians had put on Christ; but he means that they were so grafted into Christ, that before

God they bore the name and person of Christ, and were more reckoned in him than in themselves."—*Calvin.*

"God now looking on them, there appears nothing but Christ. They are, as it were, covered all over with him, as a man is with the clothes that he has put on."—*Locke.*

All those who have been rightly baptized have thus put on Christ. "The old man is to be put off with his deeds (Eph. iv., Col. iii.), that being the sons of Adam we may become the sons of God. This is not done by a change of dress, by any law or works, but by the new birth, and the renovation which takes place in baptism. In baptism there is not given a legal clothing of righteousness, or of our works, but Christ becomes our clothing."—*Luther.*

"When Paul addresses believers who rightly use the signs, he joins them with the truth which they represent. Not, therefore, without reason, when he addresses believers, does he say, that they in baptism had put on Christ."—*Calvin.*

"All of you that are sincere believers are taken into the family of God as his adopted children by Christ, whom you believe in. For as many of you as have sincerely consented to the baptismal covenant, and so been baptized into the faith of Christ, have thereby even put him on as your garment, and wholly given up yourselves to him, and so, as his members, are united to him. All that are baptized have professed this; which the sincere perform."—*Baxter.*

"For so many of you as have been baptized unto

Christ, and so have taken upon you the solemn profession of his religion, may then be said to have put on Christ, to be clothed with his character, and covered with his righteousness."—*Doddridge.*

"As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, in consequence of your believing in him with your heart unto righteousness, and have thereby testified and professed your faith in him, have put on Christ, have received him as your righteousness and sanctification."—*Benson.*

Thus, according to St. Paul, all baptized persons have put on Christ, *i. e.* are justified through him. But sinners are justified by faith alone (Rom. iii. 20–28); and the righteousness of Christ is put on none but believers and saints, Rom. iii. 22; ix. 30; Rev. xix. 8. Since, then, all persons rightly baptized are justified, and yet none but believers can be justified, it follows that all persons rightly baptized must be believers: in other words, that believers alone ought to be baptized.

The same truth appears from a comparison of the 27th verse with the 26th. "Indeed, the connection of the 27th verse with that which precedes shows that the faith in Christ which was publicly professed in baptism, and not the mere outward administration (whether the baptized person had faith or not) was specially intended."—*Scott.*

The Galatians were the children of God *by faith* (26) because all baptized persons have put on Christ, *i. e.* are justified and adopted (27). If we assume that baptism was administered indiscriminately to all ap-

plicants and was no profession of faith, then the argument would be this: "You are the children of God by faith; because baptized persons put on Christ, and those who put on Christ are his children, therefore baptized persons without faith are his children: you are therefore his children *by faith*, because you are his children *without faith*," which is absurd. But if we assume that baptism is an act of faith, then the argument is sound: "Ye are the children of God by faith; because all who are baptized in faith put on Christ, and those who put on Christ are children of God: as then you have been baptized by faith, you have put on Christ by faith, and have become the children of God by faith." Hence baptism is an act of faith according to this text; and believers alone ought, therefore, to be baptized.

Col. ii. 11, 12.—"*In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead.*"

As persons, rightly baptized, are buried with Christ to sin by a faith which God has wrought in them, and are risen with Christ to a new life by the same faith, it is plain that no persons but believers ought to be candidates for baptism, because no others to die and rise again by faith; and no persons but those who make a credible profession of such faith ought to be received to baptism.

Titus, iii. 5. — "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*"

As "the renewing of the Holy Ghost" means the renewing by him, so "the washing of regeneration" might mean the washing by regeneration. Had this been his meaning, he would have used these terms with an allusion to baptism. Why else employ the periphrasis, when the single word "regeneration" would have expressed his meaning better? The expression, "God saves us by regeneration," would have been fully as forcible as the expression, "God saves us by the washing of regeneration." He evidently used this unusual expression with reference to the baptism of converts, and thus alludes to baptism as the sign of regeneration.

But there is reason to think that by "the washing of regeneration" the Apostle means not the regeneration which washes, but the washing which is connected with regeneration. It is so understood by Calvin, Beza, Grotius, Whitby, Macknight, Bengel, Bloomfield, Slade, and others. The genitive is often used thus by Paul and other New Testament writers to express the effect wrought by any person or thing. Thus we read of the God of grace, of hope, of love and peace (1 Pet. v. 10; Rom. xv. 13; 2 Cor. xiii. 11), because God gives grace, hope, love, and peace. "The spirit of divination" (Acts, xvi. 16) means the spirit enabling to divine. "The spirit of wis-

dom" (Eph. i. 17) means the spirit which makes wise. 'The blood of sprinkling" (Heb. xii. 24) is the blood which sprinkles. "The gospel of peace" (Rom. x. 15; Eph. vi. 15) is the gospel which gives peace. 'The word of reconciliation" (2 Cor. v. 18) is the word which reconciles. "The gospel of salvation" (Eph. i. 13) is the gospel which saves. "The baptism of repentance" (Luke, iii. 3) is the baptism which was the sign of repentance: and so "the washing of regeneration" is the washing which is the sign of regeneration. "Baptism," says Calvin, "is suitably and truly called 'the bath of regeneration.' Here Paul addresses believers, in whom, because baptism is always efficacious, it is properly joined with its true meaning and effect." The Spirit effects a moral change, and baptism is the sign of it. The Spirit imparts new life, and baptism manifests it; and both complete the new birth. As a child first lives and then comes into the world, and thus is born, his entrance into the world not giving life but manifesting it, so the child of God receives life and then is baptized, and thus is new born, his baptism not giving spiritual life but manifesting it; and therefore baptism is the washing of regeneration, or the washing which is the manifestation and completion of regeneration.

By these two things, the washing and the renewing, the spiritual renovation and the baptism which manifests it, God saves his people. All the passages respecting baptism are exactly in harmony in this matter. According to Matt. xxviii., a man must

become a disciple, and then be baptized. Mark, xvi., declares, that he who believes and is baptized shall be saved. John, iii. 5, declares, that no one can enter the kingdom of heaven, that is, be saved, unless he is new born by the Holy Spirit and by baptism. Acts, ii., declares, that those who repent and are baptized receive the remission of their sins with the gift of the Spirit, and are thus saved. Acts, xxii., declares, that if a man calls on the Lord Jesus for salvation, or comes to him in faith, and is baptized, his sins are washed away, and he is therefore saved. Rom. vi. and Col. ii., declare, that when a man is baptized he dies to sin, and rises to a new life by faith, and is therefore saved. Gal. iii., declares, that all who are baptized put on Christ, become the children of God, and are therefore saved; and thus the text under consideration declares that believers are saved by the renewing of the Spirit and by baptism. But if baptism be the sign of regeneration, an unregenerate person ought not to be baptized. If the rite is a public manifestation of spiritual life, it should be withheld from those who afford no tokens of that life. If baptism is the washing of regeneration, it ought not to be administered to the unregenerate. To suppose that "God's Spirit again moves on the face of the waters and sanctifies them for our cleansing, and cleanses us thereby" (Tract 67), is wholly at variance with the word of God (John, i. 12, 13; Gal. iii. 26; James, i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23), is contrary to facts, and grossly superstitious: and since the water cannot give spiritual life, and yet

manifests it, it must be preceded by it. Baptism cannot be the baptism of regeneration except with respect to those who are previously regenerate; and as Christian baptism is the baptism of regeneration, according to the text, regenerate believers alone ought to be baptized.

1 Pet. iii. 20, 21.—"*The long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were brought safely through the water.*[1] *The antitype whereunto,*[2] *even baptism, doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the inquiry after God of a good conscience,*[3] *by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*"

This passage clearly shows that none but believers have a right to baptism.

[1] *Were brought*, &c. διεσώθησαν δι' ὕδατος. So the word is translated, Acts, xxiv. 24. "Were safely conveyed through the water."—*Macknight*. "Through the water: when they were on the waters; διὰ for ἐν, as Rom. iv. 11."—*Grotius*. "Through the flood—mediis in aquis."—*Slade*.

[2] *The antitype to which*, ᾧ ἀντίτυπον. "Ἀντίτυπος, formed after, copied, (τὸ) ἀντίτυπον, a copy."—*Liddell*. "Ἀντίτυπα, copies, Heb. ix. 24; ἀντίτυπος, corresponding, antitypical."—*Robinson*.

[3] *The inquiry*, &c. συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεόν. "Ἐπερώτημα, an inquiry; ἐπερώταω, to consult, to inquire of (τὸ χρηστήριον, τὸν Θεόν)."—*Liddell*. "Ἐπερώταω, to ask; Matt. xii. 10; xvii. 10; Luke, xi. 46; John, xviii. 7; Acts, i. 6, &c. &c. In the Septuagint, to ask, Josh. ix. 14; Isa. xxx. 2. To inquire, 1 Kings, xxii. 7, 8; Jer. xxi. 2. To ask after God, Isa. lxv. 1. So Rom. x. 20. 'I was made manifest, τοῖς ἐμὲ μὴ ἐπερωτῶσι, to those that asked not after me.' Hence, ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεὸν is 'an inquiry after God.'—*Bretschneider in Robinson*. "A petition to God."—*Steiger*.

1. Baptism is here said to be the antitype, or the fact corresponding, to Noah's entrance into the ark. As then the vengeance of God brought a flood upon the earth, so a flood of divine wrath is now about to overwhelm the ungodly. As the ark was divinely appointed as a refuge for Noah and his family, so Christ is the divinely appointed refuge for believers, Isa. xxxii. 2. As Noah entered into the ark, so believers take refuge in the merit and mediation of Christ by faith; but as they are here said to take refuge in Christ by baptism, baptism must necessarily be an act of faith. All who are in Christ are believers (Rom. xii. 5; xvi. 7; 1 Cor. iii. 1; 2 Cor. v. 17; xii. 2; Gal. i. 22, &c.); but all sincerely baptized are in Christ, as Noah was in the ark; and therefore sincere baptism is an act of faith.

2. It is said here that baptism saves us. But we are saved by grace through faith (John, iii. 16; Acts, xvi. 31; 1 Cor. i. 22; Eph. ii. 8), and without faith there is no salvation, John, iii. 36; Mark, xvi. 16; Heb. xi. 6. Baptism, therefore, without faith cannot save us; but as the statement of the Apostle is absolute that baptism does save us, it follows that baptism implies faith, is an act of faith, and may be put for faith itself.

3. It is here added, that the baptism which saves us is not the external rite merely, but that which is signified by it, "the inquiry after God of a good conscience." Baptism, then, is the seeking after God with a conscience set free from the guilt of sin (Heb. ix. 14; x. 22), and a mind conscious of

habitual rectitude and sincerity, Acts, xxiii. 1; xxiv. 16; Rom. ix. 1; 1 Cor. iv. 4; 2 Cor. i. 12; 1 Tim. i. 5, 19; iii. 9; Tit. i. 15; Heb. xiii. 18; 1 Pet. iii. 16. But no one except a believer can so seek after God. Faith only can free the conscience from guilt, faith only can purify the heart (Acts, xv. 9); and, therefore, no one but a believer has a good conscience in either sense. And if baptism is the seeking after God with a good conscience, baptism must be an act of faith; and so it is understood by the best writers.

"Baptism, and the sincere profession of religion conjoined with it, preserves us from perdition."—*Rosenmüller in Bloomfield's Digest.*

"The best translation appears to be, 1. The petition of a good conscience, and then it notes the effect of baptism, viz., that holy confidence and security wherewith a conscience sprinkled with the blood of Christ addresses itself to God in prayer as a Father."—*Poole.*

"Baptism, including all that is properly meant by baptism as a religious rite, that is, baptism administered in connection with true repentance and true faith in the Lord Jesus, and when it is properly a symbol of putting away of sin, and of the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit, and an act of unreserved dedication to God, now saves us. No man can be saved without that regenerated and purified heart of which baptism is the appropriate symbol."—*Barnes.*

"The godly ask, consult, and address God with confidence; the ungodly not. Therefore, the appeal of a good conscience, *i. e.* the appeal wherein we ad-

dress God with a good conscience, our sins being both pardoned and renounced, saves. This appeal is made in baptism."[1]—*Bengel.*

Since this is the nature of true baptism, it must be an act of faith: for believers alone have a good conscience; to seek God with a good conscience is to exercise faith in him; baptism, therefore, is an exercise of faith, and believers alone can properly apply for it.

If we recur to the passages which have been examined, we may see what abundant and varied evidence they afford that baptism is an act of faith, must be preceded by faith, and is a duty which none but believers can rightly fulfil.

Baptism is a consecration to the Triune God, Matt. xxviii. 19; and specially to Christ, Rom. vi. 3.

It is a seeking after God with a good conscience, 1 Peter, iii. 20.

It must be preceded by true repentance, Acts, ii. 38.

It is the sign, manifestation, and completion of regeneration, John, iii. 5; Tit. iii. 5.

It is a death unto sin and a new life of holiness, Rom. vi. 3-6; Col. ii. 11, 12.

Those rightly baptized are in Christ, 1 Pet. iii. 20.

Those rightly baptized have put on Christ, Gal. iii. 26.

[1] "Non dubium est quin Hebraicum שאלה, spectaret apostolus. . . . Piorum est rogare, consulere, compellare cum fiduciâ Deum. At impiorum non rogare illum, aut idola rogare. Salvat ergo nos rogatio bonæ conscientiæ, *i. e.* rogatio quâ nos Deum compellamus cum bonâ conscientiâ, peccatis remissis et depositis, 16, Heb. x. 22. Hæc rogatio in baptismo datur."—*Bengel.*

True baptism secures pardon, Acts, ii. 38; xxii. 16.

True baptism secures the gift of the Spirit, Acts, ii. 38.

Baptism is generally necessary to salvation, John, iii. 5.

True baptism saves, 1 Pet. iii. 20; Mark, xvi. 16; Tit. iii. 5.

Each one of these statements is a distinct and conclusive proof that baptism must be preceded by faith; each by itself is sufficient to prove that believers alone should be baptized: and when they are all combined, the accumulated evidence is such that it is difficult to understand how any one who is guided in his religious opinions by the word of God can arrive at any other conclusion.

To the proofs that baptism implies faith which are afforded by the spiritual effects ascribed to baptism, let me add the proof afforded by its external consequences. If baptism in the apostolic age was a profession of faith, baptized persons would naturally be reckoned members of the Christian churches in connection with which they were baptized; but if baptism were nothing but the exhibition of certain spiritual truths, a symbol administered to all who seriously desired it, then baptized persons would not become by the act of their baptism members of the churches in connection with which they were baptized; but would be admitted subsequently upon their profession of faith. Now this latter case never happened. The baptized person was admitted at once to communion with the church in connection with

which he was baptized; and there is no instance of the contrary. If a man was baptized when there was no church, he could not join what did not exist. Such was the situation of the Ethiopian eunuch. But immediately that the three thousand were baptized on the day of Pentecost they became church members, and were admitted to the table of the Lord: for we read that "they continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers," Acts, ii. 42.

At Samaria, Corinth, and other places, the baptized at once formed the church, Acts, viii. xviii.; and, therefore, when disciples died, and the ranks of the Christian army were broken, new converts were "baptized for the dead," 1 Cor. xv. 29. They became at once disciples and soldiers of Christ in place of the dead.

Let the reader consider well the force of this evidence. Since baptism is the seal of regeneration, none but the regenerate ought to be baptized; since it is the sign of justification, it should be administered to those only who are justified; since it was attended by the gift of the Spirit, none but believers to whom that gift was limited ought to receive it; since it saves, and there is no salvation except by faith, it should be administered to those only who have saving faith; and since it conferred the right of admission into the churches of saints and faithful brethren, none but saints and faithful brethren ought to receive it. If unbelievers are baptized, baptism is the sign of regeneration to the unregenerate and of

justification to those who are still in their sins; it ought to save and does not, and admits into communion with the churches those who are unfitted for that privilege. Such an application of baptism could not be intended, and therefore the baptism of the unbeliever is contrary to Christ's authority by which believers alone ought to be baptized.

VII.—The Practice of the Churches of the first centuries of the Christian Era afford evidence that Believers alone ought to be baptized.

It is only necessary to adduce one more proof that baptism in the apostolic churches was considered a profession of faith. If it was so considered, we may expect to find that for some time the same belief continued to prevail. And if this belief is proved to have been common in the first four centuries of the Christian era, we may consider it to afford some proof that it was also the belief of the apostolic age. As churches tend to decay we may expect to find relaxations in doctrine and discipline springing up of themselves, but innovations requiring more spirituality and self-denial could scarcely prevail to any extent. The information which we possess on this point may be comprised under the four following heads. In the early Christian churches catechumens were not baptized, a profession of faith was required of applicants for baptism, the baptized were esteemed regenerate believers, and they were admitted at once to the Lord's table.

1. In the early churches catechumens were not baptized.

"Eusebius reckons but three orders (in the church), rulers, believers, and catechumens." "The name believers is here taken in a more strict sense, only for the believing or baptized laity, in contradistinction to the clergy and catechumens." "In this sense the words, believers, πιστοὶ, *fideles*, are commonly used in the ancient liturgies and canons to distinguish those that were baptized and allowed to partake of the holy mysteries from the catechumens." "The believers, πιστοὶ, or *fideles*, being such as were baptized and thereby made complete and perfect Christians, were upon that account dignified with marks of distinction above the catechumens." "Catechumens have the names ἄμυστοι, ἀμύητοι, the uninitiated or unbaptized." "None came to the Lord's table but such as were first initiated by baptism: whence the custom was, before they went to celebrate the Eucharist, for a deacon to proclaim, Ἁγία ἁγίοις, 'Holy things for holy men. Ye catechumens, go forth.'"[1] "St. Austin, in one of his sermons to the newly baptized, says, 'Having now dismissed the catechumens, we have retained you only to be our hearers.'" (29.) "Theodoret also says, 'We discourse obscurely of divine mysteries before the unbaptized, but when they are departed we speak plainly to the baptized.'" (30.) "Catechumens were a degree higher than either heathens or

[1] Bingham, i. 22–24, 26, 27.

heretics, though not yet consummated by the waters of baptism." (iii. 2.) "The church found it necessary to lengthen the time of probation, lest an over-hasty admission of persons to baptism should either fill the church with vicious men or make greater numbers of renegadoes and apostates in time of persecution. For this reason the Council of Eliberis appointed two years' trial for new converts, that if in that time they appeared to be men of a good conversation, they might then be allowed the favour of baptism." (iii. 6.) "They were obliged to get some of the holy scriptures by heart before they were baptized." (iii. 11.) "Upon the approach of the Easter festival, it was usual for the catechumens to give in their names in order to be baptized." (17.) "As they were all examined so they were all exercised alike for twenty days before baptism." (18.) "During this same term of twenty days the catechumens were also exercised with abstinence and fasting as a suitable preparation for baptism." (21.)

2. A profession of faith was required from applicants for baptism.

"Let such as give in their names to be baptized be exercised a long time with abstinence from wine and flesh, with imposition of hands and frequent examination, and so let them receive their baptism." —*Fourth Council of Carthage: Bingham*, iii. 21. "They that are about to receive baptism must first make frequent prayer and fastings, ... and make confession of all their former sins."—*Tertullian, Ibid.* 22. "Together with the creed they were

also taught how to make their proper responses in baptism, particularly the form of renouncing the devil and his works, and the contrary form of covenanting with Christ and engaging themselves in his service. . . . And these engagements they actually entered into not only at their baptism but before it, as a just preparation for it. 'For,' says the author of the *Constitutions*, 'they ought first to abstain from the contraries, and then come to the holy mysteries, having purged their hearts beforehand of all spot, and wrinkle, and habits of sin.'" (24.) "The conditions required of all those who received it (baptism) were the profession of a true faith and a sincere repentance." (120.) "Converts from Judaism or Gentilism before they could be admitted to baptism were obliged to spend some time in the state of catechumens, to qualify them to make their professions of faith and a Christian life in their own persons. For without such personal professions there was ordinarily no admission of them to the privilege of baptism." (179.) "Their baptism was generally deferred for two or three years, or a longer or shorter time, till they could be sufficiently instructed and disciplined to the practice of a Christian life." (199.) "Men were obliged to give security to the church that they intended to live by the rules of the gospel before they were admitted to the mysteries of it." (205.) "Three things were now indispensably required of them,—a formal and solemn renunciation of the devil, a profession of faith made in the words of

some received creed, and a promise to live in obedience to Christ or by the laws and rules of the Christian religion." (217.) "The next thing required of men at their baptism was a vow or covenant of obedience to Christ, giving themselves up to the government and conduct of Christ." (224.) "Some urged that to deny wicked men the privilege of baptism was to root out the tares before the time. To which St. Austin replies that this rejection of them from baptism was not rooting out the tares, but rather not sowing them as the devil did." (225.) "Together with this profession of obedience, there was also exacted a profession of faith of every person to be baptized. . . . One way or other the whole creed was repeated, and every individual article assented to by men at their baptism." (228, 229.) "The matter is so incontestable, that the ancients did never baptize into the profession of any single article but into a complete and perfect creed, that I think it needless to insist upon the proof of it." (230.)

3. The baptized were esteemed regenerate believers. The πιστοὶ, or *fideles*, were such as were baptized and thereby made complete and perfect Christians.—*Bingham*, i. 25. "A noble effect of baptism was regeneration, or a new birth, from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, for every Christian was supposed to be born again by the waters of baptism." (iii. 114.) "Hence baptism had the name of παλιγγενεσία ψυχῆς, the regeneration of the soul, and ὕδωρ ζωῆς."—*Ibid.*

4. The baptized were admitted at once to the Lord's table. The words, believers, πιστοὶ, *fideles*, are commonly used in the ancient liturgies to distinguish those that were baptized and allowed to partake of the holy mysteries from the catechumens. (i. 23.) "Believers were called τέλειοι, the perfect, because they were consummate Christians, who had a right to participate in the holy Eucharist." (i. 26.) "As soon as the ceremonies of baptism were finished, men were admitted to a participation of the Eucharist; for this was τὸ τέλειον, the perfection or consummation of a Christian, to which he was entitled by virtue of his baptism. Therefore all the ancient writers speak of this as the concluding privilege of baptism, which in those days was always immediately subjoined to it." (iii. 332.) "In reference to its making men complete members of Christ's body, it (baptism) had the name of τελείωσις, consummation, because it gave men the perfection of Christians, and a right to partake of the τέλειον, the Lord's Supper." (i. 123.) "A class of penitents only excepted, all other baptized persons were not only permitted, but by the rules of the church obliged to communicate in the Eucharist under pain of ecclesiastical censure." —*Bingham*, v. 297.

CHAPTER III.

INFANT-BAPTISM.

SECTION I.—*General Considerations to show the Unlawfulness of Infant-Baptism.*

WE have seen that baptism is a solemn profession of repentance, faith, and devotedness, which no one but a believer can honestly make, and which therefore ought to be administered to no one without a credible profession of faith. As, then, infants are incapable of such profession, they ought not to be baptized without express authority from Christ, which cannot be adduced, or plain apostolic precedents, which are not to be found.

Since Christ has made baptism to be a voluntary act, what right have his ministers to substitute for it what is perfectly involuntary? No baptized infant has been baptized by his own consent, no person baptized in infancy has ever in his own person honoured Christ's ordinance; but conformity was forced upon him when he was as unconscious as a stone. Can this be right? Since Christ has required baptism as a profession of faith in him, how can his ministers lawfully administer it to those who

can make no profession, and thus, with respect to them, completely alter the whole character of his ordinance? Since he has made repentance and faith necessary to baptism, what right can they have to set his commands aside by baptizing those who have neither repented nor believed? And since he has ordained that saints and faithful brethren should be introduced to fellowship with saints and faithful brethren by this ordinance, how can it be proper that churches should by it receive into their society unregenerate and unconscious infants instead?

Infant-baptism differs essentially from the baptism of believers. The believer is active in his reception of baptism, but the infant is passive; the believer asks for it as a privilege, the infant receives it without its consent; the one by it professes his faith, the other professes nothing. The baptism of the believer and the baptism of the infant are therefore two different baptisms, with different significations and different consequences; and both, therefore, to be lawful, must have a separate warrant from the Lord. Since they are quite different institutions, the precept which enjoins the one rather by inference forbids the other. Since Christ has commanded a baptismal profession, no man may without his authority hinder that baptismal profession by substituting a parental act for the act of the person himself. Since baptismal dedication in infancy sets aside, with reference to all such infants, baptismal profession in after life, the one must not be lightly substituted for the other, lest a human invention be found to subvert a divine

ordinance. The commands of Christ to each penitent believer are plain, "Repent, and be baptized;" "Arise, and wash away thy sins;" "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." But where is the authority for the baptismal dedication of the infant without profession? In vain do we look through the whole New Testament for a line, for a word, in its favour.

But why, it has been asked, do you not equally insist on express authority for administering the Lord's Supper to women? Men are expressly commanded to receive it, but where is the express command for women? I answer, that there is express authority for their reception of it. Women who believe in Christ are by that faith disciples of Christ, and children of God, as much as believing men, Gal. iii. 26–28; Acts, v. 14. When baptized, they are baptized into the church of Christ, Acts, viii. 3. They are, therefore, members of churches as well as men, and are so addressed, Rom. xvi. 1, &c. &c. They were, therefore, members of the church at Corinth, 1 Cor. xiv. 34. But all this church is said by the Apostle to have assembled to receive the Lord's Supper, women as well as men, 1 Cor. i. 2; xi. 18, 20, 26. And as this habit was recognised by the Apostle, and not condemned, it had his sanction: see also Acts, ii. 38–42. Besides, if there had been no express authority for the admission of women to the Lord's table, there would have been no similarity between the cases. For in Christ Jesus "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor

free, there is neither male nor female," Gal. iii. 28. A believing woman before God is exactly as a believing man; and, therefore, the reception of the Lord's Supper by a woman is exactly the same spiritual act as the reception of it by a man: and since "there is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus," a command given to disciples generally is given to women as well as men; and when Jesus said to his disciples respecting the cup, "Drink you all of it," he said it to women as well as men.

What a shallow fallacy likewise it is to argue that because the same spiritual act may be performed by two classes of believers, of which one alone has been named in the precept, that therefore two opposite acts may be performed by these two classes! When one believer receives the Lord's Supper, it is the same act as when another receives it; and we may infer the duty of the one from the duty of the other. But when an unconscious infant has baptism forced upon it, and, being yet unregenerate, receives the sign of regeneration, its baptism is a rite totally different from the baptism of a believer, who, as regenerate, voluntarily expresses by baptism his faith and his obedience. The duty, therefore, of one believer to baptize his infant cannot be inferred from the duty of another believer to be himself baptized; and the case which rests upon so forced an analogy must be weak indeed.

But if there is no analogy between the reception of the Lord's Supper by women who believe and the reception of baptism by unconscious infants, there is

a close analogy between the reception of baptism by an infant and its reception of the Lord's Supper. While believers are commanded to receive both baptism and the Lord's Supper, the word of God is silent respecting the administration of either sacrament to infants. It is, therefore, by the nature and design of the sacraments that we must judge whether or not they are to be administered to them: and the analogy between the two sacraments demonstrates that either both should be received by infants, or both deferred till the infant has become a believer. As the adult must believe before he can properly receive the Lord's Supper, so he must believe before he can properly receive baptism. As the reception of the Lord's Supper is a profession of faith, so the reception of baptism is a profession of faith likewise. If, therefore, the adult is qualified for baptism, he is qualified for the Lord's Supper; and if he is disqualified for the Lord's Supper, he is disqualified for baptism. The qualifications for each ordinance are the same. But what is true of the sacraments generally, must be true of them with respect to all who receive them; for the sacraments remaining the same, the qualifications must remain the same also. If, therefore, the infant is qualified for baptism, he is qualified for the Lord's Supper; and if he is disqualified for the Lord's Supper, he is disqualified for baptism. Hence it follows, that if you may infer the baptism of infants from the baptism of believers, you may also infer the admission of infants to the Lord's table from the admission of believers to it,

for the qualification or disqualification of infants is the same in both cases. But if it be superstitious and unlawful to administer the Lord's Supper to infants because they have not the faith which is requisite for it, so it must be equally superstitious and unlawful to administer baptism to them when they are equally incapable of the faith which is requisite for it. If a distinct authority is wanted to justify the admission of infants to the Lord's Supper, it must be equally wanted to justify their admission to baptism, because both ordinances require the same qualifications.

To those who ask authority for their exclusion from the ordinance of baptism, I reply that no such exclusion is needed. Christ's law is, "Repent, and be baptized." We know that we do his will when we baptize the believer; and as he has not commanded the baptism of infants, it can be no violation of his command to delay their baptism till they become believers. His silence renders it improbable that he intended them to be baptized; the required conditions of baptism render it more improbable; and if no positive precept be found prohibiting the baptism of infants, as no precept is found prohibiting their reception of the Lord's Supper, yet the revealed nature and design of both sacraments amount to such a prohibition.

All that the advocates of infant-baptism can venture to say with reference to the evidence of the New Testament is, that the exclusion of infants is not certain. But is this evidence enough upon which

to baptize them? May Christ's requirements of repentance and faith be so lightly set aside? Let us recall the rule of the Apostle Paul in all cases of doubt, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. . . . He that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin," Rom. xiv. 5, 23. Since there is no evidence that Christ intended infants to be baptized, and it is certain that he intended believers to be so, it is safer to follow his declared will than uncertain inferences which may be in opposition to it. Jesuit morality is indeed of a different kind. "Probability," the Jesuit says, "is a doctrine according to which, in the concurrence (collision?) of two opinions, of which the one is more probable and in conformity with the law, the other less probable but favouring concupiscence, it is lawful to follow the latter in practice."—*Extraits des Assertions*, tom. i. p. 27, note. "The authority of one good and learned doctor renders an opinion probable."[1] "That any opinion may be probable to me, it is sufficient that I have a reason which seems to me good, or the authority of a good doctor which is equivalent to a reason."[2] "It is sufficient for an inexperienced and unlearned man to follow the opinion which he thinks to be

[1] "Infertur . . . unius doctoris probi et docti auctoritatem opinionem reddere probabilem."—*Vincent Filliucius.*

[2] "Ut aliqua opinio sit mihi probabilis, sufficit mihi ratio, quæ mihi videatur bona, vel auctoritas doctoris boni, quæ rationi æquivaleat."—*George de Rhodes.*

probable, because it is maintained by good men, who are versed in that art, although the opinion may be neither the more safe, nor the more common, nor the more probable."[1] "It would be an insupportable burden to the consciences of men, and liable to many scruples, if we were bound to follow and examine the more probable opinions."[2] "It is lawful to follow the more probable opinion, rejecting the less probable, although it may be the more safe. It is lawful to follow the less probable opinion, although it may be the less safe. It is sufficient for unlearned men to act rightly, that they follow the opinion of a learned man, . . neither is it necessary to be certain of acting rightly."[3] "He does not sin who follows a probable opinion, rejecting the more probable, whether the latter be the opinion of others or of the agent himself, and whether the less probable opinion which he follows be the safer or the less safe."[4] "We may follow a probable opinion without sin, rejecting that which is more probable and more safe."[5] "In fact, many opinions may be

[1] "Homini imperito et illiterato satis esse si sequitur opinionem quam ipse putat esse probabilem, quia docetur a probis et peritis in eâ arte; etiamsi illa nec sit magis tuta, nec magis communis, nec magis probabilis."—*John of Salas.*

[2] "Intolerabile esset onus conscientiarum, ac multis scrupulis expositum, si opiniones probabiliores sequi et investigare teneremur."—*Stephen Fagundez.*

[3] "Nec requiritur certitudo bene operandi."—*Vincent Filliucius.*

[4] Nicholas Baldel.

[5] Anthony Escobar.

adduced which are prudently probable, although they may be contrary to scripture."[1] "We are never more free from the violation of the law than when we persuade ourselves that we are not bound by the law. . . . He who says that the law is not binding cannot sin. He, therefore, who follows the less rigid and less probable opinion cannot sin."[2] "Even in the administration of the sacraments it is lawful to follow the less probable things, rejecting the more probable."[3] "Of two contradictory probable opinions touching the legality or illegality of any human action, every one may follow in practice or in action that which he would prefer, although it may appear to the agent himself less probable in theory."[4]

This Jesuit doctrine certainly justifies infant-baptism. The scripture says, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Let every man ascertain by examination of scripture that his course of conduct is agreeable to the will of God. Let him obtain complete scriptural evidence that he may lawfully neglect to make a profession of his faith by

[1] "De facto dantur plures opiniones prudenter probabiles, licet sint contra scripturam."—*Charles Anthony Casnedi.*

[2] "Nunquam sumus magis liberi a violatione legis, quam quando nobis persuademus, nos non teneri lege. Qui autem decet legem non obligare peccare non potest."—*Ibid.*

[3] "Etiam in administratione sacramentorum licitum est sequi minus probabilia, relictis probabilioribus."—*Matthew Stoz.*

[4] "In duabus contradicentibus probabilibus opinionibus, quæ versantur circa actionem humanam, an ea licita sit, necne, quisque in praxi, sive operatione, sequi potest quam maluerit; etsi ipsi operanti speculative minus probabilis videatur."—*Paul Laymann.*

immersion. The Jesuit replies, "It would be an unsupportable burden to the consciences of men, and render them liable to many scruples, if we were bound to examine and to follow the more probable opinions. It is lawful to follow the more probable opinion, rejecting the less probable, although the latter may be the more safe. The authority of one good and learned doctor renders an opinion probable." "Scripture seems to command the immersion of all believers as a profession of their faith; but Christians cannot be bound to ascertain this duty for themselves. Many excellent men think infant sprinkling is sufficient. Their authority renders this opinion probable. It must be lawful to follow it."

Scripture says, "He that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin:" in other words, "He that doubteth the sufficiency of infant sprinkling is condemned if he adheres to it, by refusing to profess his faith by immersion, because he adheres to it without conviction that it is the will of God. For whatsoever is done without belief that it is the will of God, is sin."

The Jesuit replies, "In the collision of two opinions, of which the one is more probable and in conformity with the law, the other less probable, but favouring our wishes, it is lawful to follow the latter in practice. It is much more agreeable not to be immersed, though immersion was probably intended; and therefore it is lawful to adhere to infant sprink-

ling. It is lawful to follow the less probable opinion, although it may be the less safe. Neither is it necessary to be certain of acting rightly. We are certain that Christ commanded believers to be immersed. We cannot be certain that he allowed infants to be sprinkled; but it is lawful to supersede the immersion of believers by the sprinkling of infants notwithstanding."

Christ has said by his Apostle Peter, "Repent, and be immersed, every one of you;" and by his own lips, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." How then can Christian churches lawfully prevent believers in general from being baptized, by taking care to baptize them long before, when they are unregenerate infants?

The Jesuit replies, "There are many opinions which are prudently probable, although they may be contrary to scripture. The sprinkling of infants is one of these. Christ commands believers to be immersed; but we think that he could not intend it. We are not, therefore, bound by his command; and we are never more free from the violation of the law than when we persuade ourselves that we are not bound by it. We declare that Christ's command to us to be immersed does not bind us; and he who says that the law is not binding cannot sin. It is utterly distasteful and offensive to be plunged into water as a profession of a death to sin, and a new life of devotedness to God. And as we prefer the sprinkling of us when we were infants to any such baptismal profession to be made by us as men, we may lawfully

adhere to the former: for of two contradictory probable opinions, touching the legality or illegality of any action, every one may follow in practice that which he prefers."

This is human nature. In examining, therefore, the claims of a duty which is unfashionable and despised, let us take care that we are not tainted by Jesuit morality, and that we do not refuse to make a profession which Christ has enjoined, from respect to human authority or the fear of human censure, from custom or convenience, from prejudice or pride. It is certain that Christ has enjoined the immersion of believers, and let it be remembered that the sprinkling of infants is not an addition to this law, but a substitution for it.

"The Reformers knew no baptism," says Mr. Budd, "but that of infants, and therefore prepared no service for adults: that was a subsequent provision to meet the evils which had been introduced by times of Anabaptist confusion. They had no idea of a church the membership of which was not constituted by infant-baptism."—*Budd's Pref.* 233.

So completely had the baptism of believers, which alone is known in the New Testament, vanished from the churches. Even now, except in the Baptist churches, not one person in a hundred is baptized as a penitent believer; the baptism of profession is vanished, the baptism of dedication by another has taken its place. Spontaneous baptism is gone, the sprinkling of those who are without thought or will remains. Christ's law is nearly sunk into oblivion, the

apocryphal corollary governs almost universal practice. Our Lord has said by his Apostle, "Repent, and be baptized;" and the Churches sprinkle those incapable of repentance. The New Testament records the baptism of believers and of no infants; the Churches now sprinkle infants and scarcely any believers. All the passages on baptism in the New Testament have lost their meaning, because baptism has been severed from faith, regeneration, remission of sins, the death to sin, the new life, the putting on Christ, salvation, all connected with baptism in the New Testament have ceased to be connected with it, because water is now administered to a different class of persons without faith. And all this has happened without any authority whatever from our Lord.

To my mind this alone is decisive. Inferences and indirect arguments, for an addition to Christ's law which in reality subverts it, are inadmissible. Nothing but express and positive enactments can sanction an innovation so entirely at variance with the spirit of the original institution. Such enactment is wanting; and the disciples of Christ seem, therefore, bound to adhere to his declared will.

Section II.—*Infant-Baptism is not warranted by the Circumcision of Jewish Children.*

Amongst the arguments used by the defenders of infant-baptism none appears to me stronger than that which is derived from the circumcision of Jewish

infants. Able men have laboured hard to justify the former by the latter, but, unless I greatly mistake, without the smallest success. The argument has been stated thus:—"Before the coming of Christ the covenant of grace had been revealed, and under that covenant there existed a divinely instituted connection between children and their parents; the sign and seal of the blessings of the covenant was by divine appointment administered to children, and there can be produced no satisfactory evidence of this connection having been done away." Here the baptism of infants now is founded upon the circumcision of infants under the Abrahamic covenant, and I undertake to show in opposition to this statement that the Abrahamic covenant, on the contrary, condemns the baptism of infants.

First, let us examine the national covenant made by the Almighty with Abraham. And here three points must occupy our attention—the persons with whom the covenant was made, the nature of the covenant, and the token which was enjoined.

I. *Let us consider the persons who were the objects of the National Covenant which God made with Abraham.* It is sufficient simply to recall the promises themselves. When God called Abraham in Mesopotamia, he said to him, "I will make of thee a great nation:" and when Abraham reached the land of Canaan, he added, "Unto thy seed will I give this land," Gen. xii. 7. Some years after the promise was thus amplified, "All the land which thou seest to thee will I give it and to thy seed for ever,

. . . and I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth," Gen. xiii. 15, 16. "Look now toward heaven and tell the stars if thou be able to number them; and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be," Gen. xv. 5. "As for me behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations: and I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God," Gen. xvii. 4–8. Ishmael, however, the son of Abraham, was not to be included in the covenant, which was made exclusively with Isaac and his posterity. "And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac, and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant and with his seed after him. As for Ishmael, I have heard thee, . . . but my covenant will I establish with Isaac." Gen. xvii. 19–21. "For in Isaac shall thy seed be called," Gen. xxi. 12. As Ishmael had been rejected, so was Esau the son of Isaac, Gen. xxvii. 27, 33; Mal. i. 2, 3; and then the covenant was renewed to Jacob thus, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, the land whereon thou liest to thee will I give it and unto thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth," Gen. xxviii. 13, 14. This covenant was afterwards renewed to the twelve tribes at Horeb, Exod. ii. 23–25; iii. 6–8; iv. 22, 23; vi. 2–8; Ps. cv. 8–10, 11, 12.

From these passages we see that all the sons of Jacob, with all their posterity, were the objects of

this national covenant. The magnitude and the perpetuity of the blessings granted under it were made to depend upon the obedience of the people to the law of God; but the title to a place within the covenant was simply a descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Ignorant or instructed, godly or ungodly, all the children of Israel were, by their relationship to Abraham, the covenanted nation. The brothers who conspired the murder of Joseph, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who perished in their sins, all those who died in the wilderness through their disbelief and rebellion, the multitudes who fell into idolatry during the rule of the judges, those of whom the Almighty said in a later period of their history, "I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against me," those who were driven to Babylon for their sins, and those who, after rejecting Christ, continued "to fill up their sins alway because wrath was come upon them to the utmost" (1 Thess. ii. 16), were all of them within the provisions of the national Abrahamic covenant. From this brief statement it is evident how little similarity there was between the Jewish nation and the Church of Christ. The Church is composed of "saints and faithful brethren . . . sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be saints," (Col. i. 2; 1 Cor. i. 2; xv. 28); the nation included multitudes of unregenerate persons who were members by birth. The Church is the body of Christ and his bride (Eph. i. 22; Col. i. 18, 24); the Jewish nation crucified him. The Church is subject to Christ

and to God (Eph. v. 24); the nation was rebellious against the divine authority, Isaiah, i. 4. The Church is a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, bought with the blood of God (1 Pet. ii. 9; Acts, xx. 28); the nation was left in its sins, Rom. ix. 32; John, viii. 24. The Church was typified by Sarah the free-woman, and its members by Isaac the child of promise (Gal. iv. 26–28); the nation by Hagar the bondwoman, and its members by Ishmael the outcast, Gal. iv. 24, 25, 29, 30. The Church is the general assembly of the children of God, whose names are written in heaven, and who are all as the firstborn, because all are heirs of God (Heb. xii. 23; Rom. viii. 14–17); to the chief members of the nation, Jesus said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do," John, viii. 44. The Church is the object of Christ's unchangeable love (Eph. v. 25); the nation was the object of his wrath, 1 Thess. ii. 16; Luke, xix. 27. The Church is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and the counsels of hell cannot prevail against it (1 Pet. i. 5; Matt. xvii. 18); the nation was judicially hardened and then cast away, Isaiah, vi. 10; John, xii. 39, 40; Matt. xxi. 43.

Instead of being the Church, the Jewish nation is frequently represented as the world in contrast with the Church, John, i. 10; vii. 7; viii. 23; xiii. 1; xiv. 17, 19, 22; xv. 19; xvi. 20; xvii. 6, 14.

There is no force in the objection that the nation of Israel was termed by the martyr Stephen "the Church, ἐκκλησία, in the wilderness," Acts, xii. 38.

So a tumultuous crowd of idolaters at Ephesus was termed by the Evangelist Luke ἐκκλησία, the church, Acts, xix. 32, 41. And the one was no more like the Church of God than the other. The idolaters at Ephesus were called a church, or assembly, simply because they were assembled in the theatre; and the rebellious Israelites at Sinai were termed the church, or assembly, because they were assembled at the foot of the mountain: and if the one civil assembly was not the Church of God, so neither was the other. When was the nation of Israel, after it ceased to be an assembly by occupying the land of Canaan, called a church?—Never. Nor was Israel any more the Church because it was called to be holy. God said unto them, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure to me above all people; for all the earth is mine, and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," Exod. xix. 5, 6. "Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy," Lev. xix. 2. But these commands and promises did not make them the Church. England and France, no less than Israel, are commanded to obey the commands of God, and so are India and China. But England and France, and India and China, are not therefore the Church of Christ. And these nations have promises as great as those which were given to Israel; for if they would keep God's covenant of grace, they would become also portions of his Church. But just as modern nations who will not believe and obey the gospel are, therefore, no

portions of the Church of Christ, so Israel, which would not obey God nor keep his covenant, never was to him a kingdom of priests nor a holy nation. There was a church of God within that nation, as there are churches of Christ within England, France, India, and China; but Israel itself was no more the Church than these nations are.

"The covenant made with Abraham was made first with himself; 2. with his household generally; 3. with his servants by name, whether born in his house or bought with money; 4. with his infant children, afterwards limited particularly to the descendants of Isaac, and afterwards again to the descendants of Jacob; 5. to their descendants as a people; 6. to their little ones, or infants, in every generation; 7. to their servants universally; and 8. to the strangers who dwelt in their nation."—*Dwight*, v. 325.

From this enumeration it is plain that the covenanted nation was not the Church of God, and that the "Abrahamic church" is only a scriptural or true expression when it denotes the elect people of God, the true believers within the nation, not the nation itself; the spiritual children of Abraham, not his natural descendants: and when a proselyte and his children were admitted into that national covenant, they were no more admitted into the Church of God than a Turk and his family would be by becoming naturalized in this country.

II. *The Nature of the Abrahamic National Covenant.*—In the passages already cited we have seen

that God was pleased repeatedly to enter into covenant with Abraham on behalf of his children. This covenant was confirmed to Isaac: "And God said to Abraham, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him," Gen. xvii. 19. And after Abraham's death God said to Isaac, "I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice," Gen. xxvi. 3. Some years later the Almighty confirmed the covenant to Jacob (Gen. xxviii. 13–15); and when at length the time came that the covenant was to be fulfilled in the actual enjoyment of the promised land by the children of Jacob, God again confirmed the covenant to them. Having now grown into a nation, and being oppressed by the king of Egypt, they cried to God, "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob, and God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them," Exod. ii. 24. "And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of *my people*," Exod. iii. 7. "I am the Lord, and I appeared unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, and I have also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the

land of their pilgrimage wherein they were strangers. I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, . . . and I have remembered my covenant, . . . and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God, . . . and I will bring you into the land concerning which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob," Exod. vi. 2–8. At Sinai God required the people to enter therefore into covenant with him to obey him: "And Moses took the book of the covenant and read in the audience of the people; and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold, the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words," Exod. xxiv. 7, 8. It was then renewed on the banks of the Jordan, just before they began the conquest of Canaan, as we learn from the following words of Moses: "Keep, therefore, the words of this covenant: . . . ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; . . . that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day; that he may establish thee to-day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob," Deut. xxix. 9–13. Upon all which transactions the author of the 105th Psalm has made this comment: "He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he com-

manded to a thousand generations; which he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac, and confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant. . . . Israel also came into Egypt, and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham. And he increased his people greatly, and made them stronger than their enemies. . . . He brought them forth also with silver and gold. . . . He spread a cloud for a covering, and fire to give light in the night. . . . He opened the rock and the waters gushed out. . . . For he remembered his holy promise and Abraham his servant; and he brought forth his people with joy," Psalm cv. 8–10, 23, 24, 37, 39, 42, 43. All these were several confirmations of the covenant made with Abraham on behalf of his descendants by Jacob. As the covenant with Isaac was a confirmation of the covenant with Abraham, and as the covenant with Jacob was a confirmation of that made with Abraham and Isaac, so the covenant made with the twelve tribes was the confirmation of that made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and that made on the banks of the Jordan was the confirmation of that made at Sinai. The Sinaitic covenant was no more distinct from that made with Abraham than the covenant made with Isaac was distinct from it. If Moses said to the people, "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb" (Deut. v. 2), Moses also has recorded that God said, "My covenant will I establish with Isaac," Gen. xvii. 21. As the former was the confirmation of the covenant with Abraham, so was the latter;

and we can no more argue that the Sinaitic covenant was distinct from the covenant with Abraham, because Moses said, "The Lord made a covenant with us in Horeb," than we can argue that the covenant at the Jordan was distinct from that at Sinai, because Moses said to those who were about to enter the promised land, "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord, that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day." The covenant at Mount Sinai was simply the covenant made with Abraham renewed and confirmed; and this is argued both by Dwight and Witsius in the following terms:—

"It was the same covenant formerly made by God with Abraham, and afterwards renewed with Isaac and Jacob. It was the same in substance: '*That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, that he may establish thee this day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God,*' Deut. xxix. 13. It was the same in fact: '*As he hath said unto thee and as he hath sworn unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.*'"—*Dwight*, v. 325.

"That promise (of the land of Canaan) was not first made at Mount Sinai, but long before, even to the patriarch Abraham, four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the law, Gen. xii. 7; xv. 7. Hence it appears what answer ought to be given to Jer. xxxi. 32 and Gal. iv. 24; namely, that the first institution of the old testament (covenant) is not

treated of in these places, but the solemn renewal and confirmation of it, and the accession of many new rites; for God himself often testified concerning that time, that he did those things in virtue of his covenant entered into with Abraham, Exod. ii. 24; vi. 8. It, therefore, remains that the testament (covenant), about giving the land of Canaan, was not then first published, but solemnly renewed, when God was now about to accomplish it."—*Witsius*, i. 422.

Let us now consider the terms of the covenant. First, the Almighty said to Abraham, "I will make of thee a great nation," Gen. xii. 2. "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: so shall thy seed be," Gen. xv. 5. "Unto thy seed will I give this land," Gen. xii. 7. "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates," Gen. xv. 18. "I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee; and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God," Gen. xvii. 6–8. "In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy

seed shall possess the gate of his enemies," Gen. xxii. 17. "I will be their God," Gen. xvii. 8. "I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God," Exod. vi. 7. "Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," Exod. xix. 5, 6. "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments; and all the people answered with one voice and said, All the words which the Lord hath said, will we do," Exod. xxiv. 3. "And Moses took the book of the covenant and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient," Exod. xxiv. 7. "Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety," Lev. xxv. 18. "If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them, then will I give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase. And ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall chase your enemies. And I will multiply you and establish my covenant with you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people. But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments, I will set my face against you," Lev. xxvi. 3–7, 9, 12, 14, 17. See the whole chapter. "And the Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people

provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have showed among them? I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation, and mightier than they," Numb. xiv. 11, 12. "Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the Lord, your carcases shall fall in this wilderness, . . . and ye shall know my breach of promise," Numb. xiv. 28, 29, 34. "Take heed unto yourselves lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God. . . . I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land," Deut. iv. 23, 26. "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; a blessing if ye obey the commandment of the Lord your God, . . . and a curse if ye will not obey," Deut. xi. 26, 27. "Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do," Deut. xxix. 9.

The following things are evident from these passages:—

1. This covenant was made with the whole nation. God required Israel to obey him, and if they revolted against him they would be condemned and punished; but they would be punished as a covenanted people. The covenant required them to be holy, but it was made with them all, holy or unholy, as the children of Abraham. When holy, they kept his covenant and were blessed. When unholy, they broke his covenant and were punished; but holy or unholy, they were within the covenant. The unbelievers who perished in the wilderness experienced

God's breach of promise (Numb. xiv. 34), and therefore the promise had been made to them: Nadab and Abihu, Hophni and Phinehas, were wicked men, but they were still legally priests. The wickedness of the people did not alter the fact that God had taken them into covenant with himself. So all who are born in a land where the gospel is known, are bound to be pious in proportion to their advantages, but the want of piety does not at once destroy those advantages. As an Englishman does not cease to be an Englishman because he is ungodly, so an Israelite did not cease to be within the Abrahamic covenant because he was ungodly. The Israelite had great privileges in consequence of his birth, as the Englishman has; and in neither case was the right determined by moral worth. The Israelite had great religious advantages because he was descended from Abraham, as the Englishman has great religious advantages because he was born in England.

2. Next we observe that the promises of this covenant were of an external character, and did not include salvation, nor renewal of heart, nor the gift of the Holy Spirit. The covenant declared that the children of Israel should be numerous; that they should possess the land of Canaan; that their territory should extend from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates; that if they were obedient, their land should be fertile, they should conquer their enemies, and live in safety; and that *if they would keep his covenant*, they should be his peculiar treasure, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. It further

provided them with religious ordinances. Under it the Shechinah assured them of the constant presence of God; he gave them prophets to declare to them his will; they had the word of God. This was, according to Paul, their chief distinction. "What advantage, then, hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way; chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God," Rom. iii. 1, 2. With this Moses combined their access to God by prayer: "For what nation is there so great who hath God so nigh to them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" Deut. iv. 7, 8. These things offered them great advantages for moral and spiritual improvement, and if rightly used would have made them a wise and prosperous people: but nowhere within the covenant was there a promise of salvation, of renewal, or of Divine influence upon the heart. Terminating in external blessings it furnished means of grace, but secured no grace. Each prophet warned them of the danger of apostasy, and each generation furnished melancholy proof that excellent means of improvement were thrown away upon a graceless and stubborn people. What single moral advantage had they which is not more amply possessed by England, France, Germany, or any other nation which possesses the bible?

It has been thought that the Abrahamic national

covenant included spiritual blessings, because the terms of the promise to Abraham respecting his descendants were, "I will be their God" (Gen. xvii. 8); and God said to them, "I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God" (Exod. vi. 7); "I am the Lord thy God" (Exod. xx. 1). Now this is the promise made to the glorified saints of Christ, "God himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Rev. xxi. 3). But it is obvious that words may have a lower or a loftier sense in different connections. All men are said by Paul to be the offspring of God, because they are created by him (Acts, xvii. 28, 29); and the Almighty declared of the Jews, "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me" (Isa. i. 2); and yet the adoption of believers into the family of God is the effect of Christ's mission alone. "God sent forth his Son to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. iv. 4, 5); "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," Gal. iii. 26; see Eph. i. 5. As, then, we may not say that the heathens are the children of God in the same sense that adopted believers are, so neither may we say that God was the God of Israel in the same sense in which he is the God of saints. He was the object of their worship while others worshipped idols, and their Almighty protector while others were without the promise of his protection; but that he made no unconditional promise to pardon, renew, or sanctify

them as a nation, is apparent from the following passages among others :—

"And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served Baalim. And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers. And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel. Whithersoever they went out the hand of the Lord was against them for evil," Judges, ii. 11, 12, 14, 15; see also vi. 10. "And Samuel called the people together, . . . and said, . . . Ye have this day rejected your God, . . . and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us," 1 Sam. x. 19. "Moreover all the chief of the priests and the people transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; . . . they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words and misused his prophets until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy," 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14, 16. "They tempted and provoked the Most High God. . . . They provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images. When God heard he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel," Psalm lxxviii. 56, 58, 59. "My people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me; so I gave them up unto their own heart's lust." Psalm lxxxi. 11, 12. "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken. I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me . . . Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers,

ildren that are corrupters ; they have forsaken the ord. . . . Why should ye be stricken any more ? Ye ill revolt more and more. Your new moons and our appointed feasts my soul hateth : they are a rouble to me, I am weary to bear them. And hen ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine yes from you ; yea, when ye make many prayers, I ill not hear ; your hands are full of blood," Isa. i. , 4, 5, 14, 15. "Go and tell this people, Hear e indeed, but understand not ; and see ye indeed, ut perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, nd make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest ney see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and nderstand with their heart, and convert, and be ealed," Isa. vi. 9, 10. "And it shall come to pass, nat when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themelves and curse their king and their God," Isa. viii. 21. I have spread out my hands all the day unto a ebellious people. . . . And ye shall leave your name or a curse to my chosen : for the Lord God shall ay thee, and call his servants by another name," saiah, lxv. 2, 15. "Be astonished, O ye heavens, this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, aith the Lord. For my people have committed two vils ; they have forsaken me the fountain of living aters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, nat can hold no water," Jer. ii. 12, 13. "Surely s a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, o have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house f Israel. . . . Thou hast played the harlot with nany lovers," Jer. iii. 20, 1. "Shall I not visit for

these things? And shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" Jer. v. 9; compare 1–8; see also Hos. iv. 12; v. 4; ix. 1; xi. 7; Amos, ix. 7, 8. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her children under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate," Matt. xxiii. 37, 38. "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof," Matt. xxi. 43. "They are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children. But in Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed," Rom. ix. 6–8. "The Jews both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us . . . to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost," 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16.

With these passages in our recollection, we must see that the covenant under which the children of Israel were placed promised them temporal blessings and means of grace, but not grace itself. Under it they could be ignorant and rebellious, turn away from God, forsake his worship, reject him, and curse him; while he could abhor them, and view them as the objects of his uttermost wrath. The expression, therefore, "I will be your God," could mean no more

than that he would be the object of worship in that nation, and their protector, involving no promise of pardon, renewal, or salvation. It was a covenant of external blessings, not a covenant of grace.

3. The Abrahamic national covenant was conditional with respect to the external blessings which alone it secured. Some part of the posterity of Abraham must indeed be numerous, must possess all the territory between the river of Egypt and the river Euphrates, and must last for many generations, because all this was promised absolutely; but we learn from the following passages, that the amount and their duration of their blessings were made to depend upon their own obedience:—

"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure to me above all people: for all the earth is mine," Exod. xix. 5. "If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; then I will give you rain in due season, and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. . . . But if ye will not hearken to me, and will not do all these commandments, I will set my face against you. . . . And if ye will not yet for all this hearken to me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. . . . And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary to me, then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins . . . And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me, then I will walk contrary to you also in fury;

and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat. And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images; and cast your carcases upon the carcases of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you," Lev. xxvi. 3–5, 14, 18, 27–30. "Keep, therefore, the words of this covenant, and do them that ye prosper in all that ye do," Deut. xxix. 9. "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse: a blessing if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, and a curse if ye will not obey," Deut. xi. 26, 27, 28. "If thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and do all his commandments, . . . all these blessings shall come upon thee. But if thou wilt not hearken to the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments, . . all these curses shall come upon thee," Deut. xxx. 1, 2, 15; see 1–68. "And the Lord said unto Moses, This people will go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them. Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them," Deut. xxxi. 16, 17; see also Joshua, xxiii. 14–16; xxiv. 19, 20. "The Lord is with you while ye be with him; and if ye seek him he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you," 2 Chron. xv. 2. "If ye be willing

and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured of the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it," Isaiah, i. 19, 20. Large blessings might be secured by obedience; but obedience was not secured by grace; and disobedience was to be followed by corresponding punishment.

4. The Abrahamic national covenant being thus conditional, was defectible. All its blessings might be lost by any individual, or by the nation; and it might, upon its conditions being broken, be wholly set aside. Its blessings were lost by multitudes, Numb. xiv. 34; Heb. iv. 2. God would not hear the prayers of the nation, Isaiah, lix. 2. His soul abhorred them, Lev. xxvi. 28–30. He declared that they should not be his people, Hos. i. 9. He predicted their rejection, Isaiah, lxv. 15. Our Lord declared the same, Matt. xxi. 43. Paul also declared it, Gal. iv. 21–31. The utmost wrath descended upon them, 1 Thess. ii. 16. And the covenant itself was done away, Heb. viii. 13; ix. 10; Jer. xxxi. 31.

This covenant with the nation was so far from being identical with the covenant of grace, that it is expressly contrasted with it. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which my covenant they brake," Jer. xxxi. 31, 32.

Here the covenant of grace is called a new covenant, which is unlike the former national covenant. According to Paul, it is a better covenant, established upon better promises (Heb. viii. 6), which has superseded the other. "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old: now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away," Heb. viii. 13.

The substance of the new covenant completely illustrates its superiority to the national covenant.

1. It is a covenant of spiritual blessings. It contains a promise of holiness: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." It promises adoption: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people;" "Thou shalt call me, My father," Jer. iii. 19. It promises knowledge "They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them" (Jer. xxxi. 34); "My people shall know my name" (Isa. lii. 6); "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord," Isa liv. 13. It promises pardon: "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. xxxi. 34); "In that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee; though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away and thou comfortedst me," Isa. xii. 1. It promises perseverance: "Thou shalt call me, My father, and shalt not turn away from me" (Jer. iii. 19); "I will betroth thee unto me for ever" (Hos. ii. 19) "I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever. . . . And I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn

away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me," Jer. xxxii. 40. Lastly, it promises the Holy Spirit: "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh" (Joel, ii. 28); "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh; and *I* will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes," Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.

2. The covenant of grace is absolute, unconditional, and effectual. Let us recall its terms: 'They shall all know me;" "I will forgive their iniquity;" "I will write my law in their hearts;" 'I will be their God;" "A new heart will I give you;" "I will cause you to walk in my statutes;" 'Thou shalt call me, My father, and shalt not turn away from me," Jer. xxxi. 33, 34; Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Jer. iii. 19; see, also, Isa. xii. 1, 2; Joel, ii. 28. 'In the covenant of works God promised life to man on condition of perfect obedience, but he did not promise to produce or effect this obedience in man. In the covenant of grace he not only promises life eternal, but also, at the same time, faith, and repentance, and perseverance in holiness, without which life cannot be attained, and which being granted life cannot but be attained. It does not depend on any uncertain condition, but is founded on the suretyship and actual satisfaction of Christ; does infallibly secure salvation to the believer; and as certainly promise faith to the elect . . . Whatever

can be conceived as a condition, is all included in the universality of the promises. Should God only promise eternal life, there might be some pretence for saying that repentance, faith, and the like, were the conditions of this covenant. But seeing God does ratify both the beginning, progress, uninterrupted continuance, and the consummation of the new life, nothing remains in this universality of the promises which can be looked upon as the condition of the whole covenant."—*Witsius*, 372, 374.

3. The covenant of grace is sure and eternal. Recall its promises: "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David," Isa. lv. 3. "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me," Jer. xxxii. 40. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified," Rom. viii. 28–30. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before

the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will . . . In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. i. 3-5, 11; see Jer. iii. 19; xxxi. 31; Hos. ii. 19; John, x. 28; xiv. 16; Heb. xiii. 10; 1 Pet. i. 1-5.

4. The covenant of grace is made with the elect, and with no others. 1. It is made with elect believers of the Jewish nation. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah," Jer. xxx. 31; see Jer. iii. 19; Isa. xii. 1, 2; lix. 20, 21; Jer. xxxii. 37-40; Ezek. xxxvi. 24-27. By these passages is intended the elect portion of Israel: "For they are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called (Gen. xxi. 12): That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed," Rom. ix. 6-8. "I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. There is a remnant according to the election of grace. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," Rom. xi. 2, 5, 7; see also 26-28.

2. It is made with the elect of every nation. "Thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles," Isa. liv. 3. "Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, for he hath glorified thee," Isa. lv. 5. "Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise," Gal. iii. 7, 29. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us; for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more," Heb. x. 14–17. "Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God," Eph. ii. 19; see also Isa. xlii. 1–6; xlix. 8; with 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2; Rom. ix. 22–26; Gal. iv. 25–31; Eph. ii. 11–19.

"The contracting parties are on the one part God, on the other the elect. . . . Here men are considered as chosen by God to grace and glory, according to his most absolute good pleasure, and so appointed heirs of eternal life, Luke, xii. 32."—*Witsius*, i. 369, 370.

"Two things are to be considered. 1st. The

covenant between God the Father and Christ the Mediator; 2dly. That testamentary disposition by which God bestows, by an immutable covenant, eternal salvation and everything relative thereto upon the elect. The former agreement is between God and the Mediator; the latter between God and the elect."—*Witsius*, i. 210.

"The Father is held forth as the principal author of it, 2 Cor. v. 19; Rom. viii. 17. The Son is mediator and executor of the covenant; the Spirit brings the elect to Christ, and in Christ to the possession of the benefits of the covenant . . . Salvation itself, and everything belonging to it or inseparably connected with it, are promised in this covenant; all which none but the elect can attain to."—*Ibid.* 370.

Rightly, then, does the Apostle Paul say that the covenant of grace is better than the legal national covenant, Heb. viii. 6. The national covenant promised external blessings, the covenant of grace all spiritual blessings in Christ; the one was conditional, the other was absolute; the one was defective, and has been done away, the other is sure and eternal; the one was made with all sorts of characters, the other is made with the elect people of God; the one was confined to the limits of a particular nation, the other is the charter of the children of God throughout the world.

III. *The Difference between Circumcision and Baptism.*—When God entered into covenant with Abraham on behalf of his children, he required them to be circumcised; and since infants were circum-

cised by divine command, it is argued that infants ought to be baptized. Since infants were required to receive the initiatory rite of the first covenant, they may also receive the initiatory rite of the second.

But this conclusion manifestly rests upon the assumed similarity of the two rites, whereas circumcision differs from baptism in all its principal features: 1. they were appointed for different persons; 2. they had different significations; 3. they introduced into different societies; and 4. they were attended by different consequences. The differences in the two ordinances were as great as those in the religious systems to which they were introductory.

1. Circumcision was appointed for unregenerate as well as for regenerate adults, baptism for the regenerate alone; whence it follows that unregenerate infants might be circumcised, but unregenerate infants may not be baptized. God appointed circumcision at the same time that he entered into covenant with Abraham; every male in his house was to be circumcised, the servants being included, Gen. xvii. 10–14. The whole nation was thus to be circumcised through successive generations, Gen. xvii. 9, 10, 12. All servants were to be included in successive ages (Gen. xvii. 13; Exod. xii. 44); and all foreigners, with all their children and servants who were living in the country, were also to be admitted to it, Exod. xii. 48, 49.

Thus circumcision was appointed for all the descendants of Jacob, and for their dependants, and

for the foreigners who lived among them, without reference to character or previous instruction. According to God's commandment, all Abraham's servants were circumcised the very day that he received the command. "And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their forcskin, in the self-same day as God had said unto him," Gen. xvii. 23, 26, 27. No previous instruction was ordained, no profession required, no examination instituted, no delay allowed. About six hundred men and boys received that day the token of the national covenant, Gen. xiv. 14. After this time, any persons who professed a wish to be connected with the favoured family, and would submit to its laws, though they were without piety or knowledge, might, apparently, without profanation, receive this rite. When the sons of Jacob required of the subjects of Shechem, a Hivite prince, that they should be at once circumcised, as the only condition on which they would enter into any alliance with them, and these heathens consented upon commercial considerations, Jacob, who must have known the transaction, did not forbid it as a desecration of the ordinance; and they at once received it, just as the heathen servants of Abraham had previously received it (Gen. xxxiv. 24). An equally indiscriminate administration of the rite took place long after, when the nation had crossed the Jordan, and were about to enter on the conquest of Canaan. Some

hundreds of thousands of men, including, doubtless, persons of every degree of irreligion and ignorance, with all their children, were ordered by the Almighty to be circumcised before they commenced their campaign, Josh. v. 2. No person can reasonably suppose that all these who received circumcision were regenerate persons, or seemed to be so. Some have said that Abraham's servants were pious, because the Lord said, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord," Gen. xviii. 19. To suppose that 318 men-servants, capable of bearing arms, with all their boys, living in a barbarous age among idolaters, without the bible or other books, were all pious, is to suppose such a miracle as the world has never seen: but if they were so, the case is not altered. All the children and servants of Isaac and of Jacob were not, surely, pious; all the subjects of Shechem were not at once converted; all the nations on the banks of the Jordan, with all their servants, were not so; still less were all the successive millions of Israelites, with their slaves and the foreigners who lived among them, and all the children of all these, converted to God, since, on the contrary, they were cast away for their obstinate ungodliness. And yet all these received circumcision by the express command of God. Circumcision, then, was appointed for all the descendants of Jacob, as such, with their servants and children; and for all foreigners, with their children dwelling among them, without respect to

character. Ignorant as well as instructed, good or bad, godly or ungodly, all were to be circumcised.

But baptism was appointed by our Lord to be administered with respect to adult believers alone, Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark, xvi. 16; Acts, ii. 38. Since, therefore, faith was required in the adult who sought to be baptized, but those who had no faith were ordered to be circumcised, it follows that the two rites were different in their character, and that those might be properly circumcised who could not lawfully be baptized. As, then, an unregenerate adult might be circumcised, an unregenerate infant might receive circumcision; but as an unregenerate adult might not be baptized, an unregenerate infant ought not to receive baptism. As repentance and faith are not necessary qualifications for the Jewish rite with reference to adults, the infant, like the adult, might receive it without them; but as they are necessary qualifications for the Christian rite with reference to adults, the infant, like the adult, must not receive it without them.

If there be such an analogy between circumcision and baptism that infants may be baptized because infants were circumcised, the analogy must extend to every class. Baptism being the substitute for circumcision, and administered on the same conditions, if any one class has a right to baptism because it had a right to circumcision, then all classes have a right to baptism which had a right to circumcision. Since infants have a right to baptism because Jewish infants were circumcised, then unregenerate adults,

servants of Christians or heathens living with them, with all their children, have a right to baptism, because all these classes had a right to circumcision. Persons of every character and their children may be baptized, because persons of every character with their children were circumcised. But this is manifestly false, since adults must not be baptized except on a credible profession of repentance and faith. The analogy, therefore, is false; and as ungodly adults may not be baptized because ungodly adults were circumcised, so infants may not receive the Christian rite because infants received the Jewish rite.

It is, however, further argued that as piety entitles an adult to baptism, and infants may be regenerated by the Spirit of God, the contrary to which we cannot know, they are also entitled to baptism. But this seems to me strange reasoning. Baptism being appointed for believers, an adult should be admitted to baptism as soon as the evidences of his faith become apparent: so, then, because an adult may be baptized upon a credible profession of faith, we are to baptize infants when such a profession is impossible. You may not baptize an adult till you have reason to believe that he is regenerate; why, then, do you baptize an infant when you have no evidence whatever that he is so? Infants are born with a corrupt nature; facts prove that even the children of believers often remain unregenerate; and unregenerate infants are no more suitable subjects of baptism than unregenerate adults. And since infants are not capable of affording proof that they are regene-

ıtc, they must be treated as unregenerate. If in-
nts are to be baptized because some among them
ay possibly be regenerate, then a crowd of Hindoos
Chinamen listening to a missionary in Calcutta or
ong Kong ought likewise to be baptized because
me among them may also be regenerate. But if
is conclusion is false with respect to a crowd of
dults, it is equally false with reference to a crowd
infants. Since faith is the revealed condition of
ptism, no persons should receive it till they afford
roof that the condition is fulfilled; and as no infant
n afford that proof, no infant should be baptized.

Further, baptism in the New Testament was the
oluntary act of those who were baptized; but cir-
ımcision was a law which the persons designated
ould not without punishment neglect. "The con-
nt either of Abraham or of his family was not
ked. The compliance of some of them, to wit,
ıch as were infants, was impossible. That of many
hers in his household was probably never yielded,
ther knowingly or voluntarily. Yet upon all these
as the seal placed by the divine command, under a
enalty for omitting it, no less than excision. In
ıe same manner was it placed upon the whole
ation of Israel, and upon all the strangers who
ere within their gates."—*Dwight*, v. 330.

As, then, circumcision was forced by a terrible
enalty on the adult, it might be given to the
nconscious infant; but as baptism was always the
oluntary act of the adult, it ought not to be given
an unconscious infant who cannot assent to it.

Further, it has been argued that if infants may not be baptized because faith is necessary to baptism, infants cannot be saved because faith is necessary to salvation. But the cases are not parallel. Infants can be saved without faith, because God can give them regeneration, which is equivalent to faith; but they are unfit for baptism, because baptism is a profession of faith, and they are capable neither of making a profession of faith, nor of anything which is equivalent to it. It is a fallacy to infer what man who is ignorant may do from what God may do who is omniscient. He can give an infant salvation, because he sees in the infant all that prepares a believer for salvation; but man may not give an infant baptism, because he cannot see in the infant the grace which fits a believer for baptism. As infants are generally unregenerate, and we can never know what cases are exceptions, unregenerate infants ought not to be injured by being baptized as regenerate. Salvation depends upon faith in the adult and on regeneration, which is equivalent to faith in the infant; and as infants are capable of regeneration, they may be saved. But baptism depends upon the manifestation of faith or of regeneration; and as infants are incapable of this manifestation, they may not be baptized.

2. The circumcision of infants under the law affords no warrant for the baptism of infants in the Christian Church, because the signification of circumcision is different from the signification of baptism. Circumcision being enjoined upon all child

en and servants in the Jewish nation could not nply either a profession of faith or a knowledge of ruth, it was, therefore, simply a token of the covenant unto which God had entered with them. hese are the words of the Almighty: "This is y covenant which ye shall keep between me and ou and thy seed after thee. Every male (כָּל זָכָר) mong you shall be circumcised, . . . and it shall e a token of the covenant betwixt me and you," en. xvii. 10, 11.[1] As circumcision was intended o signify the circumcision of the heart, the renunation of all sin (Rom. ii. 28, 29; Col. ii. 11; eut. x. 16; xxx. 6), it was enjoined upon children nd servants to show that God required this renunation of sin by all the covenanted people. It was he token that they must be a holy people to obtain is blessing (Deut. vii. 6; xiv. 2, 21; xxvi. 19; xxviii.); but it involved no profession of piety, and was no gn of existing religious character. With respect o Abraham, indeed, Paul has said, "He received the gn of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of he faith which he had yet being uncircumcised," om. iv. 11. But this statement was made by the postle with reference to Abraham alone, and cerinly did not describe the force and effect of circumcision with respect to his posterity generally. When Abraham was seventy-five years old he left Haran by faith, Heb. xi. He was, therefore, justi-

[1] זָכָר does not mean a child, but simply a male. See verse 23. lso, i. 27; vi. 19; xxxiv. 15; Exod. xii. 5, &c.

fied by faith then. Ten years later in his life the Almighty said to him, "Look now toward heaven and tell the stars if thou be able to number them: so shalt thy seed be. . . . And he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness," Gen. xv. 6. When, therefore, God enjoined the rite of circumcision, he had been many years a justified believer; see Gen. xvii. 1, 2. How then was faith reckoned to him for righteousness? "Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision; and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised," Rom. iv. 10, 11. God renewed his covenant with him because he was a believer; and the token of the covenant was the seal or mark that he was accepted as such. But this was obviously untrue of the majority of those who were ordered to receive the token of the national covenant. Neither to the infants, nor to the servants of the Jewish nation generally, was circumcision "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which they had yet being uncircumcised," for neither the infants, nor the servants generally, could be looked upon as justified believers before their circumcision: but to them it was simply what God declared it to be, a token of the covenant into which God had entered with them, Gen. xvii. 11.

"We admit," says Mr. Wilson, "that circumcision was not a seal of personal righteousness to any except Abraham."—P. 399.

"It is perfectly plain that Abraham's family were not all believers in the evangelical sense, nor

deed in any sense, at the time when this seal was fixed to them; for some of them were infants. is equally plain that the great body of his descendants were also not believers when they were rcumcised; they, too, being almost all infants. he conclusion is, therefore, irresistible, that circumsion was not and could not be intended to be a al set by God upon the actually existing evanelical faith of those who were circumcised; because part of those who were first circumcised by the mediate command of God, and almost all those ho were circumcised afterwards, were, at the time their circumcision, unpossessed and incapable of is faith."—*Dwight*, v. 331.

Neither infant nor servant received circumcision virtue of their piety nor of the piety of their rents; but simply as Israelites or servants of raelites. The covenant with Abraham and his ns was similar to the covenant made by the Alighty earlier with Noah and his sons. Circumsion, the token of the Abrahamic covenant, was milar to the rainbow which was the token of the venant with Noah (Gen. ix. 8, 9, 12, 13): and as the inbow, though the token of God's covenant, implied profession of religion in the sons of Noah and eir children, so circumcision, though the token the Abrahamic covenant, implied no profession the sons of Abraham and their children. The e involved no profession of piety in any one; t was simply a token of the covenant into hich God had entered with them. All these in-

fants and servants of Israel were within the covenant before they received its token. Parents might be ignorant or wicked, but that did not affect the claim of their children. The son of Shimei had the same right as the son of David to the token of the covenant; the son of Manasseh no less than the son of Josiah. Neither children nor servants made any promises, but they had a right to the token of the covenant, because they were already within the covenant by birth or position. But baptism, as we have seen, involves a profession of faith, so that it could be said of all those rightly baptized that they were buried with Christ and with him rose to a new life through faith, Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 12.

The circumcision, therefore, of the adult servant, involved neither knowledge nor profession; the baptism of the adult convert involves both. The circumcision of the servant was a token of the repentance and service which God demanded of him; the baptism of the adult convert is a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had, being yet unbaptized. One was the act of a person doomed to excision if he disregarded it; the other is a free act of faith and love. This being the difference between the two rites with respect to adults, we may see that infants might receive the one, but may not receive the other. If the ignorant and unregenerate adult was obliged to receive the token of the national covenant, the unconscious and unregenerate infant might receive it; but since the ignorant and unregenerate adult may not receive baptism, the unconscious and unregene-

rate infant ought not to receive it. Since the servant, who professed nothing, received circumcision, the child also who professed nothing might receive it; but since the adult may not be baptized without professing repentance and faith, the child who cannot make that profession may not be baptized.

3. We may further learn that the circumcision of infants was not meant to sanction the baptism of infants, from the difference in the two communities to which these two rites admit those who receive them.

Circumcision was the rite by which the circumcised person entered into the possession of the rights and privileges of a Jewish citizen, whilst others could have very little intercourse with the chosen people. The Jews reckoned it "an unlawful thing for a man that was a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation," Acts, x. 28. He who received circumcision might associate with them freely, receive the passover, offer the sacrifice of the law, assist in all their festivals, and generally become entitled to all the privileges of the national covenant. But to become a citizen of that nation required no more spirituality than to become a citizen of England. As an Englishman is bound by his opportunities of knowledge and improvement to serve God, so an Israelite was bound to serve him: but as a man does not cease to be an Englishman because he is irreligious, so neither did a descendant of Abraham, or a circumcised servant, cease to be a citizen of the favoured nation on that account. Notwithstanding

their advantages, the nation was corrupt and perverse from the beginning. A large part of those who were rescued from Egypt perished in their unbelief. Century after century, resisting all warnings, they continued to worship idols, till they were driven into captivity for their sins. When they were restored from Babylon, it was only to renew the proofs of their incurable ungodliness, till they consummated their rebellion against God by rejecting the Lord Jesus Christ, and were cast off. Compared with the Church of Christ, they are like Hagar the bond-woman compared with Sarah the free-woman. While the Israelite is, like Ishmael, a bond-servant to be cast out, the believer is, like Isaac the son of promise, a joint-heir with Christ, Gal. iv. 25–31. Instead of being the Church of God, as some have thought, the Jewish people are often in scripture termed "the world," John, i. 10; iii. 19; vii. 7; viii. 23; xv. 18, 19; xvi. 20; xvii. 14. In the days of the Apostles they continued to fill up the measure of their sins till the wrath of God fell upon them (1 Thess. ii. 16), and they have long since been cast off (Gal. iv. 30; Matt. xxi. 43), never again to share in the privileges of the people of God except by coming, as the heathen also may come, into the Church of Christ by faith, Rom. xi. 23–26.

But baptism admits to communion with the Church of God. That Church is composed of the children of God (Heb. xii. 23), is Christ's body (Eph. i. 22, 23), the temple of the Holy Ghost (Eph. ii. 21, 22), the household of God, Eph. ii. 19. Each particular

Church of Christ, if faithful, is to a great extent a part of the Universal Church, its members are generally saints and faithful brethren, Rom. i. 1; 1 Cor. i. 2; Eph. i. 1; Phil. i. 1; Col. i. 2. All who are not saints and faithful brethren are false to their own profession, false brethren come in privily, (Gal. ii. 4), crept in unawares (Jude, 2); and to be put out as soon as known, 1 Cor. v. 11, 13; 2 Cor. vi. 14–18; Gal. v. 12; 2 Thess. iii. 6, 14. All the members of each church are saints by profession, and ought to be so in reality.

Hence, when a person was admitted by circumcision to communion with the corrupt nation, that transaction was according to the divine law: but when a person is admitted by baptism into a corrupt church, the transaction is against the divine law.

It may be objected, that as the members of a church ought to be saints, so ought the members of the Jewish nation to have been; and the corruption of the nation then was as much contrary to the will of God as the corruption of a church now. But the question before us is not the duty of individuals, but the difference between the nation and the church, viewed as communities owned by God, into which persons were to be introduced, according to the divine law, by circumcision and by baptism. When the nation became corrupt, it remained still the covenanted nation, because it was composed of the descendants of Abraham, and it was owned by God as such. Still, therefore, in the most corrupt times, were infants and servants to be introduced into it by

circumcision. But when a church becomes corrupt, it is no longer owned by Christ, and his saints are to shun it. According to the will of God, therefore, during the continuance of the national covenant, persons were to be introduced into communion with the Jewish nation by circumcision, when God knew that it would be generally corrupt. But, according to his will, persons are to be introduced by baptism into communion with churches only when they are sound and faithful, when they are generally composed of saints and faithful brethren; and, further, baptism gives, by Christ's appointment, to each baptized person the right of fellowship with all the purest churches throughout the world, the right of communion with all saints.

The qualifications, then, for admission to the one community must be very different from those required for admission to the other. For admission to citizenship among the Jews, it was enough to be a descendant of Abraham, or a slave of his descendant.—For admission to the communion of saints, it was necessary to profess to be,—and, since false profession is odious to the Almighty, it is necessary to be,—a penitent believer, a saint, a child of God. To the one community all conformists might be admitted by circumcision; to the other all penitent believers may be admitted by baptism. Since infants might be conformists, they might be Jewish citizens by circumcision; but since they cannot be known to be penitent believers, they must not be admitted to the communion of saints by baptism. The difference

n the two communities marks the difference in heir respective members. Each must admit members suitable to itself, and no others, lest it should e deterioriated. A person might be fitted for admission into the one, and not fitted for admission nto the other. And this was the case with infants. The nation of Israel was as distinct from the Church f Christ, as an infant-school is distinct from the House of Commons. And we may no more argue hat an infant is fitted for admission into an association of Christian believers, because he was fitted or an association of Jewish citizens, than we may rgue that he is fitted to become a member of Parliament, because he is fitted to be member of a lass in an infant-school. Any infant might become Jewish citizen; a child of God alone can become a nember of his Church: and the divine appointment f infant circumcision can afford no sanction for the aptism of infants.

4. The circumcision of infants affords no sanction or the baptism of infants, because of the different ffects which are said in scripture to flow from these wo ordinances.

Circumcision, being the initiatory rite which introduced to the external privileges of the Abrahamic ational covenant, was a token of the covenant, *i.e.* a ign that God required repentance and piety in those whom he promised to bless. But when rightly eceived, it secured neither salvation, nor grace, nor ardon, nor any spiritual blessing beyond those which were external. It gave great privileges and

and blessings of an external kind, but nothing beyond. "What advantage, then, hath the Jew, or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: *chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God,*" Rom. iii. 1, 2. The chief blessing afforded by the national covenant being the possession of the oracles of God, it still left the Israelites in bondage, slaves rather than children of God (Gal. iv. 3, 25); it did not exempt from the curse of the law (Gal. iii. 10); it did not save from judicial obduracy (John, xii. 39, 40; Isa. vi. 9, 10); it ended to many, who misused its privileges, in destruction, Gal. iv. 30; Lev. xxvi. 14, &c.

Baptism, on the other hand, when rightly received, being the true profession of a death unto sin, and a new life of faith and devotedness to God through Christ by the Spirit, was the bath of regeneration (Titus, iii. 5), was accompanied by the remission of sins (Acts, ii. 38; xxii. 16), was the act of putting on the righteousness of Christ (Gal. iv. 27), and ended in salvation, 1 Pet. iii. 21; Mark, xvi. 16. The qualification for rites with effects so different could not be the same. It is seen at once to be most improbable that the rite sealing the external privileges of the law should be administered on the same terms with the rite sealing the spiritual and eternal blessings of the gospel. It is exceedingly improbable that there should be the same required qualifications for blessings so exceedingly diverse. Can we think that nothing more should be

sked to put a man into the position of a royal rince (1 Pet. ii. 9) than is asked to put him into he position of a bond-servant? Gal. iv. 7, 25. But more is asked. To be put in possession of the xternal blessings of the national covenant, it was nough that a man was the bond-slave of a descend- nt of Abraham; to be put into possession of the piritual and eternal blessings of the new covenant a nan must be a penitent believer. Circumcision ex- ressed that a man was a slave in the nation of srael; baptism expresses that a man is a believer n Christ. To be admitted to circumcision, a man nust prove his servitude; to be admitted to baptism, man must prove his faith. Hence it follows that nfants were capable of the one rite and are incapable f the other. Like the slaves of Israel, they could e placed under the instructions provided by the aw; but, unlike penitent believers, they are inca- able of receiving the truths of the gospel. And he divine appointment of circumcision for infants, vhereby they were placed under the Mosaic disci- line, is no sanction for the baptism of infants, vhereby they would be recognised as members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the king- lom of heaven.

The foregoing remarks show how impossible it is o argue for the divine appointment of infant-baptism rom the divine appointment of infant circumcision. The two rites are so distinct, that persons who are itted to receive the one are utterly unfitted to re- eive the other. Designed for different classes,

bearing different significations, admitting to different communities, and attended with different results, the first might properly admit those who were excluded by the second, and the second properly exclude those who were admitted by the first. Circumcision was enjoined upon all the descendants of Jacob, and their servants, whether they were godly or ungodly; baptism was offered to no adults except regenerate believers. Circumcision involved no profession of faith, and all the servants of Israelites were obliged to receive it upon pain of excision; baptism expressed the faith of the baptized person, and was his voluntary act. Circumcision admitted to the privileges of a favoured but corrupt community which was about to be cast away; baptism admitted to the communion of saints. Circumcision introduced to external means of improvement, as festivals, sacrifices, and communion with the chosen nation; baptism was the seal of pardon, regeneration, and salvation.

Every reader can see at once that unregenerate infants might be circumcised, because capable, as well as unregenerate adults, of conformity to the law; but unregenerate infants should not be baptized, because they are utterly excluded, so long as they remain unregenerate, from all the privileges and blessings of the gospel. Circumcision accomplished for the unregenerate infant all that it was intended to accomplish; but baptism accomplishes for the unregenerate infant absolutely nothing. The circumcision of the unregenerate infant was a blessing to him, because it introduced him to a moral

and religious training; but the baptism of the unregenerate infant is a mischief to it, because, while it adds nothing to his means of instruction, it deludes him with the mockery of a pretended adoption into the family of God, which may hinder him from seeking a real adoption.

The unlawfulness of Infant-baptism proved from the Analogy between Circumcision and Baptism.

Further, while the dissimilarity between circumcision and baptism shows that the administration of the one to infants does not justify the administration of the other to them, the same thing is proved by the real analogy between these rites. As both are initiatory rites of religious systems, and both are tokens of divine covenants, so both are ordered to be applied to those who are previously within the covenants. All those who were admitted to circumcision were first within the covenant of which it was the appointed seal. As God made a covenant with the descendants of Jacob, with their children and slaves, irrespective of religious character, he ordered them to receive the token of his covenant; and as he has made a new covenant with all believers, he has ordered them also to receive the token of the covenant. No one was permitted to receive the token of the first covenant, whether child, slave, or stranger, who was not first within the covenant; and by analogy no one ought to receive the token of the second covenant who is not first within it; and as infants

cannot be shown to be within the second covenant, because they cannot be shown to be believers, so by the analogy of circumcision they ought not to receive its token.

The unlawfulness of Infant-baptism proved from the fact that Circumcision did not introduce infants into the Abrahamic covenant of grace.

But the covenant which God made with Abraham contained further promises. Let us recall the words, "As for me behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations," Gen. xvii. 4. "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," Gen. xii. 3. "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice," Gen. xxii. 18. Upon which promises the Apostle Paul has made the following comments: "The promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith; for if they who are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect. . . . Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations," Rom. iv. 13–17. "The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying,

n thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they
vhich be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham,"
Gal. iii. 8, 9. "To Abraham and his seed were the
promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of
nany; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ,"
Gal. iii. 16. It was here promised to Abraham that
Christ should be his descendant, that the nations
hould believe in Christ, and that believing they
hould be blessed in him. They should be no
onger under the curse of the law (Gal. iii. 10), but
e blessed with faithful Abraham (Gal. iii. 8, 9),
pardoned, adopted, sanctified, preserved, and brought
o eternal glory through faith. Thus the promises
nade to Abraham contained two distinct covenants,
he one made with his natural posterity, the other
vith his spiritual posterity; the one left its subjects
n bondage, the other led its subjects to adoption;
he one furnished temporal advantages and means of
nstruction, the other secured salvation; the one was
conditional legal covenant, the other was an un-
conditional covenant of grace. His spiritual pos-
erity, as such, had no part in the first of these cove-
nants; his natural posterity, as such, had no part in the
econd. All these spiritual blessings were promised
not to Israelites but to believers, not through the law
but through faith. "For the promise that he should
e heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his
eed through the law, but through the righteousness
f faith. . . . Therefore it is of faith that it might be
y grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all
he seed; not to that only which is of the law, but

to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations," Rom. iv. 14, 16, 17. The blessings of the national covenant were to be obtained by obedience to the law, Exod. xix. 6; Lev. xxv. 18; xxvi. 3, 4; Ps. lxxxi. 8–14; Isa. i. 19, 20. They were therefore conditional, they might be forfeited, and they were so (Isa. lxv. 15; Matt. xxi. 43; Gal. iv. 30), because "the law worketh wrath" (Rom. iv. 15), only serving to manifest the corruption of men, and to expose them to the punishment of disobedience.

If, therefore, obedience had been the condition of the covenant of grace, believers would not have been blessed, because, still imperfect in obedience, they would have forfeited their blessings, and "faith would have been made void;" but as the covenant was absolute, as God said, "I have made thee a father of many nations," "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," therefore it was to be secured by faith alone, that it might be of mere mercy, so that it might be fulfilled to all believers. "Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. . . . And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. . . . Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, that the blessing of Abraham might come upon

the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. . . . Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be by the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore, then, serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. . . . Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise," Gal. iii. 7–29. As God had promised to bless the Israelites if they were obedient to his law (Exod. xix. 5, 6; xxiv. 7, 8), the Judaizing Christians maintained that obedience to the law of Moses, which was part of the national covenant, was necessary to salvation (Acts, xv. 1, 5; Gal. iv. 9, 10, 21; v. 1–4); and Paul corrected their error by declaring that the covenant of grace made with Abraham on behalf of all believers, four hundred and thirty years before that the giving of the law completed the national covenant, secured salvation by grace through faith to all believers. Thus the blessings of the Abrahamic national covenant were promised to works; and the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant of grace were promised to faith. The national covenant was made with all Israelites,

believers as such having no share in it; and the covenant of grace was made with all believers, Israelites as such having no share in it. The natural descendants of Abraham were under the law, which still left them, though possessed of great privileges, liable to apostasy and excision; and his spiritual descendants were under the covenant of grace, which secured their eternal salvation. "It is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free-woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants, the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. . . . Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. . . . Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free," Gal. iv. 22–31. The Jewish nation then, according to Paul, was typified by Hagar; the Church of God within the nation was typified by Sarah. Unbelievers in the Jewish nation were typified by Ishmael; believers, whether Jew or Gentile, were typified by Isaac. The nation was the object of the Abrahamic national covenant; the Church of God within and

vithout the nation was the object of the Abrahamic covenant of grace. The national covenant was made vith Jews as Jews, the covenant of grace was made vith Jews and Gentiles as believers. The privileges of the first covenant were attained by birth, the privileges of the second by a new birth. Faith alone vas no introduction into the first, descent alone vas no introduction into the second. Many Gentiles who triumphed in Christ were excluded from he one; all the Jews who rejected Christ were excluded from the other. Cornelius had no part in he one, Caiaphas none in the other. There were hus in the Jewish nation two communities, the one of the circumcised descendants of Abraham, without faith, who were in bondage; the second of the believing descendants of Abraham, who were children of God: the one within the national covenant by descent, the other within the spiritual covenant by faith. When, therefore, circumcision was administered to the Jewish infant, it was a token of the Abrahamic national covenant within which the infant was placed by birth, but no token of the Abrahamic covenant of grace within which the infant was not placed till it became regenerate by grace. Circumcision marked the infant as a citizen of the chosen nation, and within the national covenant, but did not mark it as a member of the Church of God, or show it to be within the covenant of grace. Now, as circumcision left the infants of the chosen nation outside of the covenant of grace, it cannot prove that infants are within the covenant of grace now.

On the contrary, as each Jew who was then born within the Abrahamic national covenant could obtain an interest in the Abrahamic covenant of grace by faith alone, so by faith alone must men obtain an interest in it now. Jew and Gentile are here alike. Both may be born to great providential and spiritual advantages; but both must be new-born to obtain a share in the spiritual and eternal blessings of the new covenant. Grace is not matter of inheritance; the infants of regenerate persons are not therefore regenerate, and those of whose regeneration we can have no proof ought not to receive the seal of regeneration. Faith must be developed and professed, before baptism, which is its token, can be rightly administered; and the circumcision of infants is no proof that they should be baptized.

Section III.—*Infant-baptism not warranted by the Promises of God to Godly Parents.*

Some excellent men derive the duty of baptizing infants from the promises which God has given in his word to the children of godly parents. The privileges of such children have been stated by two estimable authors lately in the following terms. "The promises made to the children of believers are exceeding rich and numerous. . . . See, then, in virtue of these promises the true position of the children of believers before the Lord. They are par-

akers of covenant love, pronounced an heritage of he Lord, and blessed by him; with explicit pro-nises of the Holy Spirit and a new heart, under the Saviour's express testimony. 'Of such is the king-dom of heaven,' already from infancy admitted by ircumcision into the Jewish church and pronounced oly by an inspired apostle. . . . How good is he Lord! Meeting the strongest wishes of parental ove, he entails upon the posterity of his people the race of his covenant. . . . The salvation of the nfant of the believer is assured. . . . If such pro-nises of spiritual blessings already belong to children, n what ground can the sign and seal of the pro-nises be withheld from them? If the greater be iven, why shall the less be withheld? St. Peter rgued most forcibly respecting Cornelius and those ho heard the word with him on whom the Holy host had fallen. 'Can any man forbid water, that nese should not be baptized which have received the oly Ghost as well as we?' So we may argue in ne case of infants. They are partakers of the pro-nise; let us show our faith in that promise by giving nem its appointed sign. That repentance and faith hich is requisite for the adult previous to baptism, in the case of the infant supplied by the promises f grace and of the Spirit to them." Another ex-llent author thus continues, "Baptism has ever een considered by the Church of Christ as that nitiating sacrament by which the child receives the olemn investiture of his privileges as a believer in hrist. . . . Invested with the high distinction of a

member of Christ, his parent will teach him that this is no futile designation, that his privileges are real and substantial. . . . This Christian parent looks upon his child really as a member of Christ, endeavours to invest him with all the privileges to which he is entitled as a child of God, and considers that he has an unquestionable title to the inheritance of glory. . . . With what a sincere effusion of holy gratitude will the faithful parent, sponsor, and believer, unite in those expressions of praise, 'We give thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, first, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit.' Not to confer on him the sign only, but the thing signified also; not to impart the seal only, but to bestow an earnest of the blessings sealed; not only to wash the child with the outward emblem of water, but inwardly to communicate the grace of the Holy Spirit which cleanses from sin. Secondly, 'To receive him for thine own child by adoption.' Not merely to give him a Christian name and to enroll him nominally among thy children, but really and truly to receive him into thy family of grace as thine own adopted child, of which thou hast given an assurance by regenerating him by thy Holy Spirit. 'And to incorporate him into thy holy Church,' to which body he is as vitally united by faith, as the member constitutes a part of the body. And this child is now dead to sin, living unto righteousness, and is buried with Christ in his death. . . . Unless in a judgment of faith and charity this child is a member of Christ,

he child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, unless he is a lively member of the Church, unless he is really regenerated by the Holy Spirit, received as God's own child by adoption, and incorporated into the holy Church, unless in answer to the faithful prayers of himself (the sponsor), the parents, and the Church, the Holy Ghost is sanctifying him as one of the elect people of God, and being one so truly blessed, he shall ever remain in the number of his faithful and elect children,—with what hope of success could a Christian man accept the office of a sponsor?" Believing all this the sponsor is urged to address the child thus: "As you are now a child of his adoption, you are at all times acceptable to him, and his ear is ever open to hear you. . . . Remember what blessed privileges you were admitted to at your baptism. You were first made a member of Christ. . . . Now I expect the evidences that you are as truly incorporated into, or become a member of Christ's mystical body, as that my arm or my leg are a part of this my natural body. . . . As you were at your baptism made a member of Christ, you were, in virtue of this connection with Jesus Christ, then made the child of God also. As God is his Father, so he is now your Father, not by nature, but by adoption and grace. And being a child of God, you are an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. If a child then, an heir, heir of God and joint-heir with Christ, enjoying the privilege of a child, heaven is given you as your everlasting inheritance. God regards you as a por-

tion of his Son, a member of his very body; and with the love wherewith he loves him, he loves you also."

As all faith must rest upon the promise of God, and every expectation which is beyond the promises of God is presumption, not faith, let us now consider what ground is afforded by the word of God for considering children as entitled to baptism, because they are, through the promises of God, members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. The promises which these pious pædobaptist authors adduce are the following:—

I. "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments," Exod. xx. 5, 6; Deut. v. 9; Exod. xxxiv. 7; Numb. xiv. 18. "Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations," Deut. vii. 9. "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those who remember his commandments to do them," Ps. ciii. 17, 18. "My righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation," Isaiah, li. 8; see also 6. "His mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation," Luke, i. 50.

If these were promises to the children of believers, no age is specified, and it would prove nothing respecting the conversion and baptism of infants. But there is no reference to children in them. If they related to children, they would declare that God shows mercy to the whole posterity of each believer as long as the world shall last, consequently that all the descendants of any pious men in past ages now alive are within the covenant of grace. The extravagance of this interpretation shows that it is false; and if so, then these passages speak nothing of children, but declare that God is unchangeably gracious, as long as the world lasts, to all who love, fear, and obey him. They contain an invaluable assurance to all believers, but are misapplied when they are interpreted of children.

II. God has sometimes shown special mercy to children. When Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, perished for their rebellion, the children of Korah died not, Numb. xxvi. 11. When Jonah was angry at the preservation of Nineveh, God said to him, "Should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand, and also much cattle?" Jonah, iv. 11.

But if God spared the lives of these children, this is no proof of their salvation. And if he has shown mercy to children, he has also shown just severity towards them. While the children of Korah were saved, the children of Dathan and Abiram perished, Numb. xvi. 27, 33. If the children of Nineveh were

saved, those of Sodom and Gomorrah perished in the fire, and those of the whole world in the flood, Gen. xix. 24; 2 Pet. ii. 5. And if the compassionate mention of the children of Nineveh shows that children may be baptized, then the compassionate mention of the cattle must show the same thing of them. All such texts, therefore, prove nothing respecting the regeneration and baptism of infants.

III. Various promises have been made to the children of Abraham.

"All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed for ever," Gen. xiii. 15; see xv. 5, 18. "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee," Gen. xvii. 7; see also verse 19. "The Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them," Deut. x. 15. "When thou shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee, thou and thy children, with all thine heart and with all thy soul, . . . the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live," Deut. xxx. 2, 6.

These promises were conditional, not absolute; they secured external blessings, but not grace; they left the children to which they referred unconverted and unblessed; they have issued in the rejection of the nation for their sins, and therefore they can con-

ey no promise of grace to the children of believers, nor establish the right of such children to baptism; nd when they are explained to declare that the hildren of believers shall have grace and salvation, hey are misapplied.

IV. Various promises have been made of perpetual lessings to the Church of Christ, among which are he following:—

"Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of he desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. . . . . All thy children shall be aught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children," Isa. liv. 1, 13. "Jerusalem which s above is free, which is the mother of us all. For t is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband," Gal. iv. 26, 27. "It is written n the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me," John, vi. 45. "The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith he Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's

seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever," Isa. lix. 20, 21.

It is obvious that these and similar promises, which are made to believers as the children of Zion in successive generations, speak nothing whatever of the transmission of piety from father to son; they declare the perpetuity of the Church, as Matt. xvi. 18, but are totally silent respecting the natural descendants of believers. And if they are interpreted to declare that piety shall descend from father to son in unbroken succession to the end of time, they are misapplied, and facts palpably contradict, not the promises of the Almighty, but the misinterpretation of them. No instances of such hereditary godliness descending in families from the apostolic days to our own can be adduced.

V. Another class of promises are those which are made to the children of believers according to the election of grace. Among these are the following:—

"Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring. And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel," Isa. xliv. 2–5.

This promise is made to the elect nation, the people of God, the Church of God among the Jews. —*Vitringa, Barnes,* &c. I will assume that the seed spoken of are not the spiritual children of the Church, as Vitringa argues (see Isa. xxviii. 22 ; xliii. 5 ; liv. 1, 13 ; Rom. ix. 6–8 ; Gal. iv. 25), but the children of believers.—*Alexander, Barnes,* &c. Then it is evident, 1. That the blessing is not promised to all the children, but to "one" and "another" (5), according to the sovereign grace of God, to the elect of God (Rom. ix. 6–8 ; xi. 5–7, 28) ; and to baptize all the children of believers, as though all were thus chosen, is to overlook and to dishonour this sovereignty of God. 2. There is a promise that the elect children of believers shall make a profession of religion (5); but there is no promise of regeneration in infancy. To baptize infants as regenerate is, therefore, wholly beyond the promise ; to receive youthful believers to profess their faith by baptism is exactly according to the promise. 3. There is a promise that God will bless the children of believers, but the means are not specified ; and to assume that infant-baptism is the mean is to assume the question under discussion, and to prescribe means and times to God.

"Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth. . . . The child shall die a hundred years old. . . . As the days of a tree are the days of my people, and my elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble ; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. The wolf and the lamb

shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock," &c. Isa. lxv. 17, 20, 22-23, 25.

1. This promise is to be fully accomplished when the latter-day glory is come; when he who dies at the age of one hundred years will be accounted a child, when men live as long as the oak and the cedar, and when wild beasts become as the lamb.

2. Even then God is sovereign to elect whom he will, and all the children of believers will not be blessed (Rev. xx. 8, 9); nor is it said that even the elect will be blessed in infancy. To baptize, therefore, children now on the ground of this promise would be a manifest misinterpretation of it.

"It shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions, and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit," Joel, ii. 28, 29. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call, Acts, ii. 38, 39. Upon this verse some argue that, as the promise of the Spirit is to the children of all believers, they may receive baptism as the sign of that superior gift; but observe: 1. The Apostle here addressed the multitude as believers or not. If as believers, then he baptized the three thousand simply

s believers; and as their children are not mentioned, hey were not baptized, and consequently the child- en of believers ought not as such to be baptized. . If he addressed them not as believers, but as nconverted, then the promise was only theirs con- itionally, that is, they would receive the promised ifts of the Spirit if they believed. See verse 38. n such case the promise was only conditional to hem, and therefore only conditional to their child- en; the Spirit was offered to them upon their elieving. 3. The children could only receive the romise in the same sense as the parents, and as the arents would experience the promise only upon elieving, so their children could experience it in the ame way alone. It was not made absolute to arents, why then to their children? It was made o those parents alone who believed, why not then to hose children who believed? As believing parents ould receive the Spirit, so would believing children nd no others. As the promise was made to child- en, so it was to slaves and to the heathen (Joel, ii. 8, 29); "to all afar off," Acts, ii. 39; Isaiah, lvii. 9; Eph. ii. 13. And if it included all the children, no less included slaves and heathens, all of whom hould be baptized no less than the infants of be- evers. 4. If it be objected that the Apostle limited he promise to those among the heathen who should e called, not merely invited (Matt. xx. 16), but alled by grace (Rom. viii. 28, 30; 1 Cor. i. 23, 24; Peter, i. 10), I answer that the promise is equally mited to the "called" multitude, and their "called"

children. All among the Jewish multitude, among their children, and among the heathen who would believe, should receive the fulfilment of the promise, and none others. There is here no promise to all the children of believers, nor any specification of the time when even the elect should be blessed; and to baptize all the infant children of believers as regenerate upon the authority of these two texts, is to misinterpret them. 6. If children are included with their parents in the covenant of grace, then not the Jewish children alone, who are here mentioned, are included, but the children of all other believers; but the Apostle expressly says that the promise belongs to those Gentiles only, whether adults or children, who are called. Consequently the promise belonged to those children of Jewish believers who were called by grace, and to no others; and the passage contains no promise of grace to the children of believers as such.

If the promise is made to all who are called by the gospel, as Matt. xx. 16, it is only made to children on condition of believing; or if it be given to those who are called by the Spirit (see Rom. viii. 28, 30; 1 Cor. i. 24; 2 Peter, i. 10), then the promise is indeed absolute, but limited to those who are "called" children, as well as others; and speaks nothing of children generally.

Similar remarks must be made on Rom. xi. 28, "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes."

As the majority of the children of Abraham, Isaac, nd Jacob, were "enemies" and abandoned to destruction (Matt. xxi. 43; John, xii. 39, 40; Gal. iv. 30; 1 Thess. ii. 16); but there was an elect few lessed for their sakes (John, vi. 44, 45, 64, 65; Rom. xi. 1–7); so God may bless whom he will among he children of believers. No one may presume upon his birth (John, i. 12, 13; Luke, iii. 8); and o baptize all the children of believers as regenerate, s to dishonour the sovereignty of God, and involve both parents and children in dangerous delusion.

VI. There are other encouraging declarations and promises to animate parents to use all means for the salvation of their children, of which the following are the most important:—

Children are a blessing from God to his servants. "Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord," *i. e.* a heritage from him; "and the fruit of the womb is his reward," Psalm cxxvii. 3. "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thy house, thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Lo, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord," Psalm cxxviii. 3, 4.

Since children are given to believers as a blessing, parents, if they do their duty, may expect to derive comfort from their children, and not sorrow.

A blessing is promised upon a godly education. "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," Eph. vi. 4. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart

from it," Prov. xxii. 6. "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him," Prov. xxii. 15. "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul," Prov. xxix. 17.

When, therefore, Christian parents educate their children carefully, in faith, with much prayer, they may expect their conversion.

The children of consistent Christians are often blessed.

"The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked, but he blesseth the habitation of the just," Prov. iii. 33.

Parents, children, and servants, all obtain a blessing often in the house of a consistent Christian, who sets a good example, and rules his family according to the directions of the word of God.

"I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. He is ever merciful, and lendeth, and his seed is blessed," Psalm xxxvii. 25, 26; Psalm cxii. 2. "A good man leaveth an inheritance unto his children's children," Prov. xiii. 22. See also Matt. vi. 33; Heb. xiii. 5; 1 Pet. v. 7. A Christian is under the care of God, cultivates the social and civic virtues which lead to success in life; recommends them to his children; so that often he leaves them at his death thriving in the world through their industry, sense, and moral worth, with the blessing of God.

"The just man walketh in his integrity; his

children are blessed after him," Prov. xx. 7. Example, authority, instruction, influence, affection, prayer, bring a blessing upon his children which lasts when he is dead.

Such means God has intimated that he will bless. "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him," Gen. xviii. 19. "They shall be my people and I will be their God. And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and of their children after them," Jer. xxxii. 38, 39.

All these promises and declarations show that pious parents often bring both temporal and spiritual blessings upon their children, but they do not say one word about infancy; on the contrary, they intimate that the blessing is to be imparted to the family through patient and consistent painstaking in doing good, through instruction, discipline, example, and prayer. Hence there have ever been except cases standing painfully out to warn parents against neglect and presumption. David certainly could not mean that all the children of all righteous persons are blessed (Psalm xxxvii. 26), for he was eminently pious himself (1 Kings, xv. 3, 5); yet his son Amnon was murdered by his brother Absalom for the crime of incest, 2 Sam. xiii. 29. Absalom was killed in an attempt to dethrone and kill his father (2 Sam.

xviii. 14); and his son Adonijah was executed as a traitor, 1 Kings, ii. 24. Solomon certainly could not think that all the children of just men are blessed after them (Prov. xx. 7), for his son Rehoboam was ungodly (2 Chron. xii. 1, 14); and it is evident that he expected that his son would prove himself a fool, and bring mischief upon himself, Eccles. ii. 17–19. It is impossible to look at the sacred history without seeing how often the children of godly men have been ungodly. Ham, the son of Noah, brought a curse upon his family (Gen. ix. 24, 25); Esau, the son of Isaac, was ungodly (Gen. xxvi. 34; xxvii. 41; Mal. i. 3; Heb. xii. 16); the sons of Jacob conspired to murder their brother Joseph; Nadab and Abihu, two of the sons of Aaron, were cut off in their sin (Lev. x. 1); the sons of Job were unlike their father (Job, i. 4, 5); "the sons of Eli were sons of Belial" (1 Sam. ii. 12); Samuel's sons were unrighteous judges (1 Sam. viii. 3); Jehoram, the son of pious king Jehoshaphat, was a wicked prince (2 Chron. xxi. 6); Ahaz, the son of Jotham, was wicked (2 Chron. xxvii. 6; xxviii. 1, 2); Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, was outrageously wicked (2 Kings, xxi.; 2 Chron. xxxiii.); and Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, was likewise ungodly, 2 Kings, xxiii. 37.

With these and similar instances in view, what sober person can think that God has promised to regenerate the children of believers generally? These promises contain no such assurance.

One excellent author accounts for this lamentable fact that godly parents are often cursed with ungodly children in the following manner: — "It is true that children when they come to age may, by personal unbelief and disobedience, fall from this grace, giving another painful example of the stubbornness of evil against all God's gracious dealings; but let God be true, and every man a liar. No experienced Christian who knows himself will charge the fault of ungodly children on God's failure in his own promise, but rather on his own or his children's unbelief and inconsistencies. He will with his whole soul clear God, however he condemns himself or his own offspring. 'If a covenanted people break their part of the covenant, they shall know his breach of promise — that is, that he is not obliged to perform what he had promised, and would have performed, if they had performed their duty towards him.'"—*Bickersteth*, 109, 110.[1]

Children, then, it seems, may remain unregenerate: 1st, through the inconsistency of even experienced Christian parents; 2d, through their own unbelief and inconsistency; and so both parents and children may experience God's breach of promise. In truth, the defects of even very eminent

[1] Is not this statement too much like John, ix. 2? Does it not imply that God punishes children with the loss of baptismal blessings for the sins which he foresees that they will after commit? Or does the excellent author mean, that the children are indeed regenerate, but afterwards fall away? An opinion which I am unwilling to ascribe to him.

and very pious parents so often cause this failure (of which many painful examples occur to me at this moment), as to make the breach of promise much more frequent than its fulfilment. Comparatively few children manifest early piety, and numbers grow up from a thoughtless childhood to an irreligious manhood; so that it is utterly improper to assume that these promises are generally fulfilled, when they are dependent upon conditions which a large proportion of pious parents are proved, by the facts, not to have kept. It is asserted that God has promised to regenerate the infants of believers, if those believers are not inconsistent; as he promised that the people of Israel should be a peculiar treasure to him if they would obey his voice (Exod. xix. 5); but if pious parents are inconsistent, as Israel was disobedient, the parents forfeit the promises made to them, as the nation forfeited the promises made to it. And how can any parent, with moderate sobriety of mind, claim and rest upon these promises, which he knows that his own inconsistency may defeat? What amount of consistency may be necessary to secure the regeneration of his infant, he knows not; but he knows that many eminent Christians have had unregenerate children, and that he has many faults. Under these circumstances, has he not more reason to expect the breach of the promise than its fulfilment, and more reason to defer the baptism of his child, as probably unregenerate, than cause to baptize it as probably regenerate?

But, indeed, this statement sweeps away the whole doctrine of infant-baptism, with its imaginary fabric of baptismal privileges. For since the regeneration of the child is suspended, not only on the faith and consistency of the parent, but also on the subsequent faith and consistency of the child, the inconsistency of either party securing the breach of the promise, how do the children of believers differ from all other children? If the children of believers are unbelieving and inconsistent, the promises are no more, it seems, fulfilled to them than to any other children; and if the children of unbelievers are believing and consistent, they are certainly as much accepted in Christ as the children of believers. So that there is in this respect no difference between these two classes; and there is no more reason to baptize the children of believers than the children of unbelievers. Since the fulfilment of the promises depends upon the faith of the children, they may be wholly abortive; and since this may often happen, how can it be right to baptize children as regenerate when we have too much reason to think that, like many others in similar circumstances, their subsequent unbelief and inconsistency will prove them to be unregenerate?

There are in scripture great promises and encouraging truths addressed to parents who will do their duty to their children. Since children are declared to be a blessing from God to his servants, it is not his will that they should be a source of shame and sorrow to them, Psalm cxxvii. 3; cxxviii. 3, 4.

A good education is declared to be generally successful (Prov. xxii. 6; xxix. 17; Eph. vi. 4); God is ready to bless them (Isa. xliv. 2–5); they are often blessed, Psalm xxxvii. 26; Prov. iii. 26; xiii. 22; xx. 7. Prompted by natural affection, and sustained by grace, many parents have educated their children with great success. Like Hannah, they have devoted them to God from their infancy (1 Sam. i. 28), heartily desiring that they should glorify him in life, death, and eternity; and influenced by this desire, they have "sought first the kingdom of God" for their children as well as for themselves, Matt. vi. 33. With this aim they have selected their books, their companions, their schools, the ministers by whom they should be instructed, and the pleasures by which they might be gratified. Being themselves godly, their principles sound, their tempers amiable, their habits dutiful, their conversation Christianlike, their friends pious, their examples have given effect to all other means which they have employed for the improvement of their children; and each has illustrated the inspired saying, "The just man walketh in his integrity; his children are blessed after him," Prov. xx. 7.

Such parents have instructed their children early and thoroughly in the way of salvation. They have made them to see their depravity by nature and practice, their guilt, danger, and helplessness. Then they have declared to them the love of God, as manifested in nature, providence, and redemption. They have often explained to them the love of the

Lord Jesus Christ, who has saved his people from the punishment due to their sins by suffering in their stead, and the condescension of the Holy Spirit who converts and sanctifies such guilty sinners. They have thus unfolded to them the free and full salvation provided for penitent believers by the love of the Triune God, and have urged them to accept it. To this end, also, they have urged them to read the word of God with other useful books; and early to delight in secret prayer. They have taken pains to let them hear instructive and awakening preaching, and to give them the advantage of pastoral instruction in bible classes, or in other ways under faithful ministers. In this manner they have instructed them in the truths of the gospel.

But, further, successful parents have taken care to govern as well as to instruct their children, watching over their habits as well as forming their opinions. While avoiding capricious, tyrannical, and unwise commands, they have required entire, prompt, and cheerful obedience; and have at the same time been indulgent to troublesome infirmities, and severe towards every species of immorality. In all these efforts they have been anxious to place them with such teachers and companions as, instead of neutralising the influences of home, would confirm them. Such parental government has often formed lasting habits, according to the well-known sayings of Solomon: "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest: yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul." "Train up a child in the way he should go, and

when he is old he will not depart from it," Prov. xxix. 27; xxii. 6.

These and all other means, however, to be successful, must be combined with a strong and operative sense of the need of divine grace in the whole process of a Christian education. No parents can of themselves secure the salvation of their children, who, when they are converted, "are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," John, i. 13. Without the aid of the Spirit, efforts to convert sinners are fruitless, 1 Cor. iii. 6. And he converts whom he will, bestowing his favour freely on those who merit nothing, James, i. 18; Phil. i. 12, 13. Hence parents must give effect to all other means by frequent prayer, to which habit the promises are very large, Matt. vii. 7, 8; John, xiv. 13. Intercession has often been blessed by the Almighty, Gen. xviii. 23; Exod. xxxii. 14; Numb. xiv. 20. He has graciously heard parental intercession (Gen. xvii. 20); intercession is agreeable to him (James, v. 16); and especially when two parents unite to pray for their children they may look for his blessing, Matt. xviii. 19. When a Christian education has been conducted thus, very often has the following promises received an ample fulfilment: "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring, and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with

his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel," Isa. xliv. 3–5.

To what affectionate parent will these terms, upon which alone a blessing can be secured for a family, seem hard? Great blessings are usually gained by great labours. "In all labour there is profit. . . . The soul of the sluggard desireth and hath nothing, but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat." By no less exertion can parents bless their children. About regeneration in infancy these texts speak nothing, and if infant-baptism be founded upon them it has no scriptural foundation. And of this many parents who sprinkle their children seem to be instinctively aware, notwithstanding the contrary instruction of many of their ministers. For thus an excellent author complains, imputing to unbelief the just and unavoidable conclusions of their understandings: "They do not consider the child as thus regenerated, adopted, and incorporated, and therefore they do not plead the promise for a blessing on their education of him as devoted to God, or call upon him as one invested with so high privileges as a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, to walk worthy of his high calling. . . . Neither baptismal blessings nor baptismal vows are distinctly presented to the mind of the child; and his baptism has no practical purpose. . . . The child grows up without any consciousness of his baptismal enjoyments or privileges; and the church, not merely the professing but the spiritual church, . . . exercises no

faith in the promise, and presents no prayers for its accomplishment towards him. Thus, even among the pious, baptism is little more than a dead letter, promises without plea for their fulfilment, vows without concern to discharge them, a ceremony acquitting them from subsequent interest, a sign signifying nothing."—*Budd*, 11, 12.

But let it be remembered that all faith must rest upon the promises of God, lying between presumption and distrust. Distrust expects too little, presumption expects too much; faith believes all that God has said, and expects all that God has promised. To doubt that a blessing will follow Christian education is distrust, because God has promised it; to assume the regeneration of children in infancy is presumption, because God has not promised it. Misapplied promises have often led to presumption. When Savonarola, at Florence, agreed to test the truth of his doctrine by walking through the fire, because God has said, "When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned," he was presumptuous. When Mr. Fletcher of Madeley, in his youth, tried to dry up the puddles in his road by prayer, because Christ has said, "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing ye shall receive" (Matt. xxi. 22), he was presumptuous. When in our own day a number of serious persons attempted to speak in unknown tongues, and to heal the sick by a touch, because Jesus had said that such signs should accompany faith in him, they also were presumptuous, Mark, xvi. 16, 17. And so

t seems to me that to baptize children as regene-
rate, assuming their regeneration without any war-
rant, either from scripture or from facts, is no less
presumptuous. As no error is innoxious, so this, I
fear, leads parents in many cases to substitute the
excited devotion of a short half-hour for the patient
labour of years. It is so pleasant to the indolent
and worldly to believe that a few prayers and a
momentary desire to commit a child to the care of
God may accomplish its regeneration and salvation;
and so easy thus to extinguish the salutary fears
for its welfare which would have led to a careful
Christian education, that this misapplication of the
promises of God is, I fear, extensively injurious.

SECTION IV.—*Baptism of Infants not warranted by the Blessing which Christ pronounced upon Little Children.*

Many think that the practice of baptizing infants
s authorized by the blessing which Jesus pronounced
upon the little children who were brought to him.
The following is the narrative of the transaction by
Mark, Matthew, and Luke:—

"And they brought young children (infants, Luke,
xviii. 15) to him, that he should touch them (put his
hands on them and pray, Matt. xix. 13). And his
disciples rebuked those that brought them. But
when Jesus saw it he was much displeased, and

(having called them to him, Luke) said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them," Mark, x. 13–16.

Of those who brought these infants to Christ we know nothing. They might be parents or other friends, pious or still unconverted; but having the children under their charge they brought them to Jesus to receive his blessing and the benefit of his prayers. Although the disciples of Jesus had baptized many converts (John, iii. 22, 26; iv. 1), these persons did not bring their children to be baptized, which may lead us to think that infants were not admitted to baptism by our Lord; but that they might receive his benediction; and when they sought the presence of Jesus for this purpose, they were reproved by the disciples for so doing. This affords evidence that our Lord did not then sanction infant-baptism; for had he done so, the disciples would not have reproved those who were fulfilling a customary duty, but would have known it to be his will that infants should be brought to him. Baptism, then, being unthought of by any of the persons concerned, the Apostles blamed these friends of the children for seeking to disturb him by their requests for infants and little children, who were beneath his notice. At which Jesus was

much displeased, and, calling the children to him, he took them up in his arms, blessed them, and said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." Here four questions meet us. 1. What our Lord meant by "the kingdom of heaven." 2. What is meant by the expression that the kingdom is "of" any persons. 3. Who are the persons indicated by the word "such." And 4. How these words were adapted to show the disciples that they had unjustly sought to prevent the children from being brought to Christ.

1. The "kingdom" means generally, if not always, the reign of God over men by his Spirit in earth and in heaven. It does not describe his providential rule over all worlds and all beings, but his spiritual rule over his chosen people begun on earth and completed in heaven, as the following texts sufficiently evince:—

"From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," Matt. iv. 17. "When he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. . . . Behold, the kingdom of God is within you," Luke, xvii. 20, 21. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," Rom. xiv. 17. "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power," 1 Cor. iv. 20. "The Father hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance

of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son," Col. i. 13; see also Matt. xvi. 28; Heb. xii. 28; 1 Thess. ii. 12; 2 Thess. i. 5, &c. &c.

2. The expression "of such is the kingdom"—τῶν τοιούτων ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία — means not that the kingdom is composed of such, but that it belongs to such, it is theirs. The following passages are exactly parallel: "Of them is the kingdom, αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία," Matt. v. 3, 10. "Of thee is the kingdom, σοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία," Matt. vi. 14. It is common in the New Testament to speak of the kingdom of heaven as a possession. God is said to give it (Luke, xii. 32); believers inherit it (Matt. xxv. 34; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; xv. 50; James, ii. 5); they receive it (Mark, x. 15; Luke, xviii. 17; Heb. xii. 28); it belongs to them, Luke, vi. 20. In harmony with which passages this text declares that the kingdom belongs to those whom he mentions.

3. The persons indicated by the word "such" are those who, through grace, are childlike persons, such as little children are, and not the children themselves. This is shown by the use of the word "such," τοιοῦτοι, in the following passages:—"With many such parables, *i. e.* parables like these, spake he the word unto them," Mark, iv. 33. "Many other such-like things ye do," Mark, vii. 8, 13. "Moses in the law commanded us that such, τὰς τοιαύτας, persons of this character, should be stoned," John, viii. 5. "They which commit such things, τὰ τοιαῦτα,

i. e. things like these, are worthy of death," Rom. i. 32. "Receive him, therefore, in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such—τοὺς τοιούτους, persons of this character—in reputation," Phil. ii. 29: see also Rom. ii. 2; 1 Cor. vii. 28; Gal. v. 21, 23; 1 Tim. vi. 5. In all these cases the word "such," with or without the article, does not mean the persons or things previously spoken of, but persons or things like them, including them or not, as the case may be. Hence in this text the word "such" must mean persons like children, not the children themselves. Had our Lord meant to declare that the kingdom belongs to children, he would have said either, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, αὐτῶν γάρ ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" or else, "Suffer *these* children to come to me, for of such children, τοιούτων παιδίων, is the kingdom." But since he neither specified the children nor said that the kingdom belonged to them, it is plain that he meant all children should be suffered to come to him, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to persons who are like them.

Since our Lord declares that children should come to him because the kingdom of heaven "belongs to such," if by "such" he meant the children, then the kingdom belongs to all children; it belongs to them, therefore, either before they are brought to Christ, and is the reason why they are to be brought; or else it belongs to them after they are brought. If the former sense be preferred, it follows that all children are indiscriminately possessed of the kingdom; for

the children in the text are distinguished from no other children except by the fact that they were brought to Christ. Their parents might be godly or ungodly, they might be brought to Christ against the wishes of their parents, and yet they were already possessed of the kingdom of heaven. All children therefore are, before coming to Christ, the subjects of grace and the heirs of heaven; and yet at the same time they are "children of wrath" (Eph. ii. 3), which is absurd.

If it be objected that these were the children of believers, I answer the statement is wholly destitute of evidence; for it is neither said that the persons who brought them to Christ were their parents, nor whether, if they were their parents, they were believers.

But assuming, without any proof, that they were the children of believers, unless it be maintained against scripture (John, i. 12) and against innumerable and undeniable facts that all the children of all believers are regenerate in infancy before being brought in any sense to Christ, then it cannot be said of such children that the kingdom of heaven is theirs; for none except believers are the subjects of that kingdom, as the following passages testify:— "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven," Matt. v. 20 "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God; . . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom o

God," John, iii. 3, 5. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his own dear Son," Col. i. 13.

It may be thought that children are here said to possess the kingdom, not before being brought to Christ, but after being brought to him. Then we have to ask, whether any can now be brought to Christ as those children were, and if the kingdom belongs only to those brought in the arms of their parents or nurses to Christ, whether the statement has any application now? Assuming, however, that to ask our Lord to bless children, or to bring them to be baptized, is the same thing as bringing them to him, then the statement is, that all children for whom any persons pray, or whom any persons bring to be baptized, are regenerate children, possessed of divine grace and heirs of eternal glory,—a conclusion, the extravagance of which is unhappily exposed by the myriads of "baptized infidels, baptized worldlings, baptized ignorants, baptized formalists, baptized profligates, who walk as enemies of the cross of Christ."—*Budd*, 76.

But let us understand our Lord to say that persons who are like children are the subjects of his kingdom, and all is plain. Little children are humble and dependent, teachable and patient of reproof, simple, free from art; such are the dispositions which Christ requires in his disciples, which grace imparts to them; and in having which they are blessed. "Be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble,"

1 Peter, v. 5. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," Matt. v. 3. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven," Matt. xviii. 3, 4. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

And this our Lord immediately explained to be his meaning, saying, "The kingdom of heaven belongs to such. Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein;" that is, "All who are like children will possess the kingdom of heaven, and no others: for no one can be a subject of Christ except he becomes through grace poor in spirit, humble, teachable, guileless, and submissive as a little child." The 15th verse is explanatory of the 14th. Since every one must receive the kingdom of God as a little child, persons who are like little children alone possess that kingdom; "of such is the kingdom of God."

Admitting, further, what cannot be admitted, that the word "such" must include children, though it does not exclude others who resemble them, then the text must state that all those who are designated by the word "such," children or adults, receive the kingdom on the same grounds. Now, since the adults receive it because they have the dispositions of little children, children must receive it too, not because of their birth, or of the prayers of others, but in virtue of these same dispositions. But as adults obtain these dispositions through regenerating grace, and

they are the evidence of faith and godliness, while little children have them naturally, without faith or godliness, they cannot of themselves prove that children possess the kingdom of heaven, because with all their tempers towards their parents and others, they are still "by nature children of wrath," Eph. ii. 13. It follows, that they can only thus be blessed because these dispositions are very favourable to instruction, and that when parents and others train up children in the fear of God, with faith and prayer, that God very often blesses it to their conversion. This is, indeed, fact. And it may well encourage parents to cheerful labour for the conversion of their little children, but declares absolutely nothing respecting infant regeneration, and affords not the slightest warrant for infant-baptism.

4. This statement was well adapted to show the disciples their fault in endeavouring to prevent little children from coming to him. Instead of despising them as young, he so loved their humility, simplicity, teachableness, sincerity, and submission, that he would admit no one into his service without these dispositions; and if these dispositions are so dear to him in all, how could he fail to love them in little children; now be without a tender sympathy for these little ones in their weakness, and a benevolent wish to bless them? And these feelings our blessed Lord still retains. Although the doctrine of infant regeneration is contrary to scripture and refuted by facts, and the baptism of infants is unauthorized and mischievous, yet children may early receive the bless-

ing of conversion. Although the friends of these children did not ask for baptism, nor did Jesus grant it, still he blessed them without baptism. And when Christian parents seek by instruction, government, and example, to lead their little children to believe in Christ, and ask him by frequent prayer to bless them, he often blesses them now; whether, like the children in the text, they are unbaptized, or, like the children of this country, they have passed through the form of religious sprinkling. There is much in the text against infant-baptism; but there is more to encourage parents to a godly training of their children.

SECTION V. — *Argument from* 1 *Corinthians*, vii. 14.

Some, in their attempts to justify the baptism of infants, have much relied upon the following passage in the first epistle to the Corinthians: "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away; and the woman which hath a husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy."[1]

[1] Ἡγίασται γὰρ ὁ ἀνὴρ ὁ ἄπιστος ἐν τῇ γυναικὶ, καὶ ἡγίασται ἡ γυνὴ ἡ ἄπιστος ἐν τῷ ἀνδρί· ἐπεὶ ἄρα τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν ἀκάθαρτά ἐστι, νῦν δὲ ἅγιά ἐστιν, 1 Cor. vii. 14.

In the Corinthian church, some heathens who had become Christians, but whose husbands and wives remained heathens, doubted whether it was lawful still to live with their idolatrous partners. When God gave Eve to Adam, he blessed their marriage, Gen. i. 27, 28; ii. 18.[1] The reason why he gave

"Ἡγίασται, is made holy; ἁγίαζω, to render ἁγίον, to make clean, to render pure."—*Robinson.* "To render and declare anything pure and lawful."—*Schleusner.* "To purify."—*Liddell.* Heb. ix. 13; 1 Tim. iv. 5.

Ἐν τῇ, ἐν τῷ, ἐν, "by means of."—*Robinson.* Matt. ix. 34; Acts, iii. 25; iv. 9; Gal. iii. 8; Heb. i. 1. "Ἐν, through, when mean or cause is assigned."—*Matthiæ.*

"Ἐπεί, otherwise."—*Grotius, Bengel, Robinson.* "Ἐπεὶ here otherwise, as often among Greek authors."—*Grotius.* "It may be rendered 'otherwise' when the clause answering to 'if it be not so' is left out."—*Matthiæ.*

Ἀκάθαρτα, Acts, x. 13–15, 28; xi. 7–9. Any one is ἀκάθαρτος with whom a Christian may not innocently associate. Ἀκάθαρτος, טָמֵא unclean, Lev. v. 2; vii. 19; xi. 4, 5; Numb. xix. 22; Deut. xiv. 7, 8, 10, 19. "A man was called טָמֵא and ἀκάθαρτος, who was expelled from intercourse with the Jews, or one from familiarity with whom the Jews thought that they must wholly abstain."—*Schleusner.*

Ἅγιος must here be the opposite of ἀκάθαρτος, and therefore pure, not defiling, and therefore lawful. "Ἅγιος, pure."—*Liddell.* "Pure, clean."—*Robinson.* 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

Νῦν δὲ. "Νυνὶ, now, is not here added to mark the time, but as the force of opposition, as νῦν, now, is taken afterwards, vii. 14; xii. 20; and νυνὶ, now, afterwards, xii. 18; 15, 20. So *nunc vero* is often used by Cicero."—*Grotius*, on 1 Cor. v. 11; John, viii. 40; xviii. 36; Rom. vi. 22; vii. 6; xv. 23, 25; xvi. 2; 1 Cor. v. 11; xii. 18, 20; xv. 20; Gal. iv. 9; Eph. ii. 13; 8; Col. iii. 8; James, iv. 16; Heb. ii. 8; ix. 26; xi. 16; James, iv. 16; &c. &c.

[1] "Liberi vestri sunt כשרים, recti, mundi, Deo grati."—*Grotius.*

but one wife to Adam was, that the evils of polygamy being avoided, their children might be trained up in godliness, Mal. ii. 14, 15. Could this blessing rest upon a Christian living with a heathen? When God gave his law to Israel, each Israelite was forbidden to marry a heathen, Deut. vii. 1–6. When such marriages took place, the Israelites were corrupted by them, and punished for them, Jud. iii 5–8. Ezra forced those who had married heathen wives in his day to renounce them (Ezra, ix. 1, 2 6–10, 12, 14;) and Nehemiah acted in a similar manner, Neh. xiii. 23–25. At the time when this epistle was written, Jews thought it "an unlawful thing for them to keep company or come unto one of another nation," because they considered heathens to be unclean, Acts, x. 28. Christians, therefore, might naturally ask themselves, whether they could lawfully and piously live with heathen partners, and whether those heathen partners were not to them "unclean." The Apostle Paul, with whose doctrine the Corinthians were familiar, taught that Christians should have no familiar association with the heathen (2 Cor vi. 14), and allowed no marriages with them, 1 Cor vii 39. Ought not, therefore, the Christian husband to leave his heathen wife, and the Christian wife to leave her heathen husband? Was not such marriage though valid according to human law, unlawful before God, impure and unholy? Ezra, ix. 11; Acts, x 28. The Apostle decided that it was not. In the First Epistle to Timothy, Paul has said, "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if

e received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified, . *e.* made pure and lawful to the Christian, by the ord of God and prayer," 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5. As, then, li kind of food was made pure and lawful to the Christian by a godly use of it and by prayer, so the eathen husband was made pure and lawful to the Christian wife by her godly and prayerful association ith him; and the heathen wife was made pure and awful to the Christian husband by his godly and rayerful association with her. In each case the nion became pure and lawful, because, like the food, t was made so by the godly use of it, the thanks nd the prayers of the Christian partner. It was oly, that is, pure, like the "holy kiss" of the Corinthian church (2 Cor. xiii. 12); it was "unde-iled" (Heb. xiii. 4), because agreeable to the will of God.[1] Were it otherwise, their children, as the hildren of an unlawful union, would be, like the eathen, unclean; and they could no more ask a lessing on them, than a person living in adultery ould ask a blessing on the children of adultery. For God once said to Israel, "I am a jealous God, isiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children nto the third and fourth generations of them that ate me," Exod. xx. 5. And when the Israelites fell

[1] "As the use of food is *sanctified* by prayer and giving of hanks (1 Tim. iv. 5), *i. e.* is rendered acceptable to God, so is the arriage union, on account of the piety which the Christian partner xercises in that relation. Apud Hebræos dicitur uxor viro *sancti-icari* per arrham, scripturam concubitum, *i. e.* fieri legitima con-ux."—*Grotius.*

into idolatry, he said of the whole nation, "I will not have mercy upon her children, for they are the children of whoredoms," Hos. ii. 4. For "the curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked," Prov. iii. 33. But, on the contrary, the children of these mixed marriages were not to be looked on as unclean, and the Christian parent might ask God's blessing on them. By this argument the Apostle both satisfied the conscience of a Christian parent whose parental love would lead him speedily to recognise the truth of so comfortable a doctrine; and rendered him patient when he saw his wife adhering to idolatry, as the partner of his life whom the divine law bade him to bear with, to cherish, and, if possible, to convert. The passage has, therefore, no reference either to baptism or to the spiritual character of the children spoken of, declaring simply that they were, with reference to the law of God, as well as with reference to the law of man, legitimate children.

But if this interpretation be wholly rejected, and any other substituted which the words may bear, it is abundantly clear that the holiness here ascribed to children is not such as could entitle them to baptism.

It has been said that the holiness of the children means simply that they are become Christians; and that the uncleanness spoken of is paganism, because pagans were esteemed by the Jews unclean. Let us then substitute these words for the words of the text, as their equivalents. "The unbelieving hus-

band is made a Christian by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is made a Christian by the husband. Else were your children pagans, but now are they Christians." Here it is said, 1. That a heathen remaining a heathen is made a Christian; 2. That if a heathen remains a heathen, his children must be heathens; 3. That if a heathen is made a Christian, but still remains in reality a heathen, his children become Christians: all which is simply ridiculous.

If, on the other hand, we leave the sense of the terms unclean and holy as indefinite as any one can desire, it remains apparent that the holiness spoken of in the text cannot entitle the children to baptism. First, as the children of the heathen husband are said to be holy, so is he said to be holy; and if their holiness entitles them to baptism, his holiness must entitle him to it. To make this more certain, it is here declared that their holiness depends on his; if he is unclean, they are unclean; if he is holy, they are holy. Their holiness being therefore simply the result of his cannot be greater than his; they are holy just as much as he is holy, and no more. But he remains an infidel and a heathen: they have, therefore, no more holiness than an infidel; and unless an infidel is as such entitled to baptism, his children as such are not entitled to it. To build the right of infants to baptism on this foundation, is to destroy, not establish it. All writers are not candid enough to own this, but some who are keen advocates of infant sprinkling have

owned it. I will only quote the opinion of Mr. Barnes, as one of the latest.

"This passage has been often interpreted, and is often adduced to prove that children are 'federally holy,' and that they are entitled to Christian baptism on the ground of the faith of one of the parents. But against this interpretation there are insuperable objections. 1. The phrase, 'federally holy,' is unintelligible, and conveys no idea to the great mass of men. It occurs nowhere in the scriptures, and what can be meant by it? 2. It does not accord with the scope and design of the argument. There is not one word about baptism here, not one allusion to it; nor does the argument in the remotest degree bear upon it. The question was not, whether children should be baptized, but it was, whether there should be a separation between man and wife where the one was a Christian and the other not. Paul states that if such a separation should take place, it would imply that the marriage was improper, and of course the children must be regarded as unclean. When one party is a Christian, and the other not, shall there be a separation? No, says Paul, if there be such a separation it must be because the marriage is *improper*, because it would be wrong to live together under such circumstances. What would follow from this? Why, that all the children that have been born since the one party became a Christian, must be regarded as having been born while a connection existed that was improper, unchristian, and unlaw-

ful, and of course they must be regarded as illegitimate. But, says he, you do not believe this yourselves. It follows, therefore, that the connection, according to your own views, is proper. This accords with the meaning of the word unclean, ἀκάθαρτα; the word will appropriately express the sense of illegitimacy, and the argument, I think, evidently requires this. It may be summed up in a few words: 'Your separation would be a proclamation to all that you regard the marriage as invalid and improper. From this it would follow that the offspring of such a marriage would be illegitimate. But you are not prepared to admit this — you do not believe it. Your children you esteem to be legitimate, and they are so. The marriage tie, therefore, should be regarded as binding, and separation as unnecessary and improper. . . . I believe infant-baptism to be proper and right; but a good cause should not be made to rest upon feeble supports, nor on forced and unnatural interpretations of the scriptures."—*Barnes*.

Section VI.—*Baptism of Households.*

We find in the New Testament three instances recorded in which whole households were baptized. The first is the baptism of Lydia and her household at Philippi (Acts, xvi. 15); the second is that of the jailer and his household at the same place (Acts, xvi. 33); and the third is that of the household of

Stephanas, 1 Cor. i. 16. From which instances it is inferred that the baptism of families was the general practice of the Apostles, that the infants in these families were baptized, and that therefore infants ought to be baptized now.

The following considerations show these inferences to be erroneous.

1. In John, iv. 53, we read of a nobleman whose son, lying sick at Capernaum, was cured by the word of Jesus. "So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth, and himself believed and his whole house." In Acts, x. 2, we read of Cornelius that he was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house." In Acts, xvi. 34, it is recorded of the jailer of Philippi, "He rejoiced believing in God with all his house." In Acts, xviii. 8, it is said, "Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house." And in 1 Cor. xvi. 15, St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Ye know the house of Stephanas, . . . that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints."

Thus three households are said to have been baptized, and five households are said to have believed. If, then, because three households were baptized with their heads, households generally, including infants, were baptized when their heads were baptized, so because five households believed with their heads, households generally, including infants, believed when their heads believed.

If it be objected, respecting the five believing households, that either they contained no children, or else that children were excluded from the statement as being incapable of faith, I reply respecting the three baptized households, either they contained no children, or children were excluded from the statement as being incapable of the faith required in baptism, and therefore unfit to receive the rite. The meaning of the word "household" must be as comprehensive in the second series of instances as in the first. If children were included in the first, they are included in the second; if they are excluded from the second, they are also excluded from the first: and consequently the baptism of the three households contains no proof that the infants within them, or that any infants, were baptized by the Apostles.

This single consideration destroys the supposed proof that the Apostles baptized infants, derived from the baptism of three households by Paul. But let us further consider what is said of these households. If the jailer was baptized with all his house, "He rejoiced, believing in God with all his house" (Acts, xvi. 34); if all his family were baptized with him, all believed with him, and with him "exceedingly rejoiced." Like him, they were baptized as believers, none of them therefore being infants. If the household of Stephanas was baptized by Paul when he was at Corinth, A.D. 51 (1 Cor. i. 16; Acts, xviii. 8–11), six years afterwards we find him declaring, in his letter to the Corinthians, A.D. 57, "I beseech

you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,) that ye submit yourselves to such and to every one that helpeth with us and laboureth," 1 Cor. xvi. 15, 16. Whatever their *διακονία*, or ministry, might be, the Corinthians were called to submit to them as godly ministers; and it is therefore clear that they were a household of believers, and not of infants, when they were baptized six years before; and the baptism of this household affords no proof that Paul ever baptized infants. The third baptized household was that of Lydia: of them it is not said that they believed, but neither is it said that there were any infants; and it would obviously be wrong to rest the propriety of baptizing infants upon the assumption that there were infants in that one family, when it is not asserted in the narrative. In truth it is improbable that there were any infants in it; for Lydia was either a married woman whose husband was alive, a widow, or unmarried. If her husband was alive, he was either at Philippi or elsewhere; if at Philippi, he was not baptized, because when the household was baptized his name was not mentioned (15). Her husband, then, remaining an unbeliever, could she ask several Christian preachers to be his guests? (15.) Or could she call his house hers without mention of him to these strangers? It is therefore clear that she was not living with a husband. 2. As she was of the city of Thyatira, *i. e.* she was probably a citizen of that place, generally resid-

ent there, she was come to Philippi to sell purple cloth. Now is it conceivable, considering heathen morals, Asiatic manners, and the depressed state of women both among Jews and heathens, that her husband would remain elsewhere, and allow his wife to hire a house and carry on business in a foreign city without him? 3. She was therefore either a widow or unmarried. If she was unmarried, there were no baptizable infants in her household; if she was a widow, it is highly improbable that there were any such infants. But in all cases she must have had assistants in the business and servants who formed her household, and these were now baptized with her as believers. If it be supposed improbable that the whole family thus at once believed, I must remind the reader that when the nobleman of Capernaum believed, his house believed with him (John, iv. 53); so did the household of the jailer (Acts, xvi. 34); and so did that of Crispus, Acts, xviii. 8. The household of Lydia, therefore, affords no more evidence that infants were baptized by the Apostles than the households of the Philippian jailer and of Stephanas.

Lastly, since the baptism of these three households can only afford a presumption that infants were baptized on the supposition that the whole households were baptized, and since there is no more evidence that they contained infants than that they contained children of all ages and servants of all characters, it follows that if the infants were baptized, the children and servants of all ages and

characters were baptized too. And the baptism of these three households by Paul is a proof that the Apostles and ministers of Christ baptized children and servants of all ages and characters in all families in which the head of the family was baptized, without any regard to their attainments or state of mind: which is absurd.

With these considerations in his view, who can believe that the baptism of three households by Paul affords any countenance to the practice of infant-baptism? If three households are said to have been baptized, five are said to have believed. Of the three baptized households, two are expressly declared to be composed of believers; in the third there is reason to believe there were no infants; and the baptism of households, if it justifies the baptism of infants, must justify the baptism of boys, young men, and servants of all ages and characters.

SECTION VII.—*Argument in favour of Infant-baptism, from the fact that there are no instances in the New Testament of the children of Christian parents being baptized upon their own profession of faith.*

This argument has been stated in the following terms: "The term adult baptism is used with two different applications, one denoting the ordinance as administered to a Christian convert from another faith; the other embracing the case of children, who

having grown up under Christian training, are baptized on the profession of their faith in Christ." "No case of adult baptism, in the sense in which it is repudiated by us and maintained by our opponents, occurs in all the word of God." "Adult baptism, as the feature of their system, is utterly unknown to apostolic practice." "Does the Baptist complain that the period of scripture history is too short to produce instances of the adult baptism which alone can uphold his theory? We reply, these instances must be of very slow growth, if the lapse of sixty or seventy years is insufficient to produce one of them."—*Wilson*, 501.

I admit that there are no instances recorded in the New Testament where the persons baptized are said to be the children of believing parents: but every candid person will admit that there was no reason to expect such a record, even on the hypothesis that believers alone were baptized in the apostolic churches, when the history of any apostolic church does not extend over a period of ten or more years; because, according to the practice of pædo-baptist churches, children are not baptized upon the faith of their parents after the age at which they can themselves believe, *i. e.* after the age of five or six years, and few young persons before the age of fifteen or sixteen years, would be sufficiently established in Christian principles to be admitted to make public profession of faith themselves. If, therefore, at the time when a church was formed, children were above five years of age, according to

the acknowledgment of all, they should be baptized upon their own profession. Our whole inquiry is restricted, therefore, to those who were at the time that the church was formed under six years of age and as few young persons would be admitted to make a public profession of their faith before the age of sixteen, we could look for the baptism of no believers being children of believers, till, at the earliest, after the church had existed ten years.

2. Since all believers were to be baptized as a matter of course, the baptism of the believing children of believers would not be noticed, except in remarkable cases.

3. We can expect no record of the baptism of the children of believers, when other baptisms are not mentioned; the baptism of the whole church being every way more remarkable than the baptism of a few members who had received a Christian education.

The silence, then, of the New Testament respecting the baptism of the believing children of Christians in any church, is no argument against the custom of baptizing such children, when either the history of the church does not extend over more than ten years, or the cases of such believing children were not remarkable, or when there is no mention whatever of baptism in that church. Tried by these rules, the silence of the New Testament, respecting the baptism of the believing children of Christians, is consistent with the fact of those baptisms in all the apostolic churches.

The church of Jerusalem was formed A.D. 33

and the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by the Apostle Paul about A.D. 62, that is, nearly twenty-nine years after Pentecost, there was therefore time for the baptism of many children of believing parents. But Paul never exercised his ministry in that church, would know nothing of the details of its particular baptisms, and does not mention any case of baptism within it; nor does the historian Luke mention any which took place after the day of Pentecost. If, therefore, the silence of the New Testament respecting the baptism of the believing children of believers, is a proof that they were not baptized, its silence respecting the baptism of infants and the baptism of converts is a proof that they were not baptized. And this is the church of whose history we know the most. The argument, therefore, against the baptism of the believing children of Christians, proves, if valid, that there was no baptism whatever in the apostolic churches; and is therefore false. Nevertheless let us glance at the notices in the New Testament of other churches.

The church of Antioch was founded A.D. 41 (Acts, xi. 42), and no baptisms are mentioned; the churches of Galatia were formed A.D. 50 (Acts, xvi. 6), and the epistle to these churches was written A.D. 51: we have no further mention of them. There was, therefore, no opportunity, within the time of the scripture record, for the baptism of the believing children of Christians.

The church of Colosse was formed, perhaps, A.D. 50 (Acts, xvi. 6), perhaps later; the Epistle to the

Colossians was written A.D. 62; there was no time, therefore, for the baptisms in question. Paul had no knowledge of the details of the church, and no occasion to mention the baptisms of any individuals.

The church of Philippi was formed A.D. 50, Acts, xvi. The last visit of Paul to it took place A.D. 58, Acts, xx. 6. The epistle to that church was written A.D. 62. So that there was neither time for the baptisms in question, nor any occasion for mentioning them if they had occurred.

The church of the Thessalonians was formed A.D. 51, Acts, xvii. 1. The epistles to the Thessalonians were written A.D. 51 and 52, and we have no later notices of that church; so that there could be no mention of the baptisms in question with reference to it.

The first visit of the Apostle Paul to Corinth was A.D. 51; the first epistle to that church was written A.D. 57, the second, A.D. 58; within the space between the earliest and latest notice of that church in the New Testament there could be no such baptisms.

The church of Ephesus was formed A.D. 55 (Acts, xix. 1–10); the Epistle to the Ephesians was written A.D. 61; there was, therefore, no opportunity for any such baptisms within the space of the sacred record.

The church of Rome was unknown to the Apostle Paul when he wrote his epistle, A.D. 58. When he was at Rome, A.D. 62 (Acts, xxviii.), he was a prisoner. The narrative in the Acts mentions no baptisms whatever, nor do the notices of Rome by the Apostle himself in any of his epistles mention them.

The churches of Asia Minor were formed between A.D. 50 and A.D. 55 (Acts, xvi. 6, 7; xix. 1–10); and the First Epistle of Peter was written A.D. 65, from Babylon, 1 Pet. v. 13. The short space between these two dates does not afford occasion for such baptisms; and if it had, how should the Apostle know them at that distance? In these churches, within the time of the sacred record, there was no probability of such baptisms, and no opportunity for mentioning them. Lastly, the epistles of James, John, and Jude, make no mention of any baptisms whatever.

In all cases the silence of scripture respecting the baptism of the believing children of Christians is sufficiently accounted for. In some cases there was no time for such baptisms within the period of the New Testament notice of the church, in others there was no mention of any baptisms. In the first of these cases there could be no record of such baptisms, because there was no opportunity for the baptisms themselves. In the second case, if the silence of scripture respecting this class of baptisms is a proof that they did not take place, then its silence respecting all baptisms is proof that they also were never performed. But if so, the churches of Galatia, Antioch, and Thessalonica, were unbaptized; if, on the contrary, these churches were baptized, although there was no record of their baptisms, so might the believing children of parents be baptized without there being any record of it. So, also, if the silence of scripture respecting these baptisms in any church be

an argument against their existence, so the silence of scripture respecting the Lord's Supper is an argument that they never received it. And if these arguments are clearly false, so is that which reasons, from an analogous silence, that there were no baptisms of the believing children of believers.

But is it equally easy to account for the total silence of scripture respecting the baptism of infants? Few in the short periods embraced by the New Testament notices of different churches could have been baptized as believers who had Christian parents; but within the same period there must have been many infants of such parents. The church received no perceptible enlargement from the first of these classes: but if infants were baptized they must in a few years have formed the majority in each church. Is it possible that their baptisms should be wholly overlooked?

When it was recorded that three thousand were baptized on the day of Pentecost, could the remarkable fact, that three hundred or four hundred children, if not more, were baptized with them, be overlooked if it had really happened? In the narrative of the conversion of the Samaritans it is recorded that women were baptized as well as men (Acts, viii. 12); if their children had been also baptized, could this important fact have been overlooked? At the formation of the Corinthian church, "Many of the Corinthians," it is said, "believed and were baptized;" but not a word is said of their children. Acts, xviii. 8.

This silence respecting the baptism of infants affords the stronger evidence that infants were not then baptized, because, had they been required to be baptized, the churches needed information on so many points respecting it. The rule respecting the baptism of believing children of Christians was plain,—they were to be baptized as all others; but what was to be the rule adopted by the churches for the baptism of infants? Were the infants of true believers alone to be baptized, or the infants of all baptized persons alone, or the infants of heathens? At what age were children to be baptized on their own profession of faith? Were infants to be baptized as already regenerate through the faith of their parents, or were they to receive regeneration through baptism; or, without receiving regeneration before or after baptism, were they to be received as catechumens? Might infants be baptized without any pledge from their friends that they should have a Christian education; or must such a pledge be given? When believers were baptized, they were baptized for the remission of sins, and their baptismal confession of Christ saved them: were these effects to follow the baptism of infants? On these and similar points the churches much needed information, if they were to baptize their infants, and on these points they did not receive from one apostolical epistle the least ray of light: they were left absolutely and entirely to conjecture. And, lastly, after parents had baptized their children, what could be more useful or more necessary than to recall to Christian parents the

stipulations which they had made for their children at the time of their baptism? Yet this is not once done. Not unfrequently are the members of churches reminded of their own baptism, with the duties implied in that solemn act; but never once in the New Testament does one of the writers remind any one of the churches of their dedication of their children in baptism. The duties of parents to children are enforced in several epistles; but among these duties the obligations entailed on them by the baptism of their infants are never once adverted to.

These facts are incompatible with the supposition that the Apostles baptized infants, and therefore prove that infants ought not to be baptized now.

To the foregoing evidence let me add the following passage in the First Epistle of Peter, addressed to the churches of Asia Minor: "Baptism doth now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the inquiry after God of a good conscience, *συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεὸν*," 1 Pet. iii. 21.[1] According to this passage, Christian baptism is

[1] "Ἐπερώταω (*τὸ χρηστήριον, τὸν Θεὸν*) to inquire of, to consult."—*Liddell*. It is the word used by the Septuagint for דרש, to seek, *e. g.* Ezek. xx. 1, 2; and for שאל, to inquire after; Deut. iv. 32; Josh. ix. 14; Jud. i. 1; 1 Kings, xiv. 37; Isa. xxx. 2. Ἐπερώταω *εἰς τινὰ*, is to inquire after any one, as *ἐπερώτησε Δαβὶδ εἰς εἰρήνην Ἰωὰβ, καὶ εἰς εἰρήνην τοῦ λαοῦ*, 2 Sam. ii. 2: therefore *ἐπερώταειν εἰς Θεὸν* is to inquire after God, and *ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεὸν* is an inquiry after God. In a similar sense it is used in Dan. iv. 17, for שְׁאֵלְתָא, a demand: and the inquiry after God of a good conscience is the inquiry after God made by any

the seeking after God with an earnest and upright mind, and with the sense of pardon through the blood of Jesus Christ; and the Apostle describes the churches of Asia Minor as saved by this baptism. But this is evidently the baptism of believers, not the baptism of infants; for how, in that case, can baptism be the "seeking after God with a good conscience?" In all these churches, the only baptism recognised by the Apostle is such a baptism as involves the seeking after God with a good conscience, and such as leads to salvation (Isaiah, lv. 6, 7; Matt. vii. 7), that is, the baptism of believers. Now these churches were founded between A.D. 50 and A.D. 55 (Acts, xvi. 6, 7; xix. 1, 10), and the Epistle of Peter was written about A.D. 65. If infants were baptized during these fifteen years, a part of each church, and in some cases perhaps the larger part, would be composed of members baptized in infancy. How, in such case, could the Apostle, when speaking of baptism, entirely overlook the baptisms of so many? But he does completely overlook them; and speaks of the baptism of them all as though it had been in every case the baptism of believers. One of the latest writings in the New Testament recognises nothing in the churches but the baptism of believers. The last time that baptism is men-

ne, 1, with sincerity and uprightness, Acts, xxiii. 1; xxiv. 16; Cor. i. 12; 1 Tim. i. 5, 19; iii. 9; 2 Tim. i. 3; Heb. xiii. 18; Pet. iii. 16 (a good conscience being opposed to a defiled conscience, Tit. i. 5); and, 2, with a sense of pardon through the blood f Christ, Heb. xi. 14; x. 2, 22.

tioned by any Apostle, his words indicate that all the baptized, whether adult converts or the children of Christians, were believers, who in baptism heartily sought the Lord, and who in so doing were saved. Is this compatible with the practice of infant-baptism in the apostolic churches?

SECTION VIII.—*Argument on behalf of Infant-baptism, from the Practice of the Churches in the first Three Centuries.*

Another proof that the Apostles practised infant-baptism has been sought in the practice of the churches during the first three centuries. The argument has been stated in the following terms: "According to the theory of the Baptist brethren, baptism alone was the order of the day in the age which immediately succeeded the apostolic. What followed? Infant-baptism. At all events, its introduction must have had some date; and the later that date, its struggle with adult baptism must have been the more severe, and a record of the struggle the more certain." "Our opponents cannot detect among the fathers of these centuries the origin of infant-baptism. They denounce it as an abuse, a subversion of the law of Christ, a substitution of human device for the ordinance of God. Strange, that of the origin of an abuse so radical, so prevalent, and so permanent, no record should be found. The extent to which

nfant-baptism is known to have prevailed in the hird century is to us unaccountable on Baptist principles. If adult baptism, in their sense of the erm, was alone apostolic, how came infant-baptism n so short a time to be the practice, not of one hurch, but of all the churches?"—*Wilson*, 526–39.

I reply, That we may conclude the baptism of ufants to be a corruption in the churches unknown o the Apostles, 1. Because there is no mention of it ill the third century. 2. Because the corruption of nfant-communion was as early and as extensive as hat of infant-baptism. And 3. Because the origin f both corruptions was obviously identical.

First, *there is no mention of infant-baptism till the hird century.* If there be, we may surely find it in he pages of the learned Bingham, who did his best o uphold this practice. Now the only testimonies which he cites from authors of the first two centuries re the following:—

"*Clemens Romanus*, who lived in the times of the Apostles, though he does not directly mention infant-baptism, yet says a thing that by consequence proves t. Speaking of Job, he says, 'Though he was a just nan, yet he condemns himself, saying, There is none free from pollution, though his life be but the ength of one day.'" Therefore, infants were baptized in the time of Clemens!!—*Bingham*, iii. 158.

Justin Martyr, A.D. 148. "Many men and many women, sixty and seventy years of age, who, from heir childhood, have been disciples to Christ, con-

tinue uncorrupted."[1] Because Justin says that God was pleased to convert many children by his grace, therefore infants were baptized in his day!!

Bardesanes Syrus, contemporary of Justin, says, "The man that is regenerated by water, and born again to God, is thereby freed from the weakness of his first nativity, which comes to him from man; and so he is made capable of salvation which he could not otherwise obtain. For so the true prophet has testified with an oath, saying, 'Verily, I say unto you, Except one be born again of water, he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'" Therefore, in the time of Bardesanes, infants were undoubtedly baptized!!

Irenæus was born about A.D. 97, was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John. He wrote about A.D. 176, "Christ came to save all persons by himself; all, I say, who by him are born again unto God, infants, and little ones, and boys, and youths, and elders. Therefore he passed through each age, being made an infant for infants, sanctifying infants; among little ones a little one, sanctifying those of that age also," &c.[2] Irenæus says that some

[1] Πολλοί τινες καὶ πολλαὶ ἠξηκοντοῦται καὶ ἑβδομηκοντοῦται οἱ ἐκ παιδῶν ἐμαθητεύσαν τῷ Χριστῷ, ἄφθοροι διαμένουσι. —*Apol.* ii. p. 62; *Bing.* iii. 160.

[2] "Omnes venit per semetipsum salvare, omnes, inquam, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, infantes et parvulos, et pueros, et juvenes, et seniores. Ideo per omnem venit ætatem, et infantibus infans factus, sanctificans infantes; in parvulis parvulus, sanctificans hanc ipsam habentes ætatem," &c. —*Irenæus*, lib. ii. 39; *Bingham*, iii. 164.

ıfants are born again through Christ, and sanc-
fied by him; therefore, all infants were baptized in
is day!!

Tertullian, who was born A.D. 160, and died A.D.
20, wrote about the beginning of the third cen-
ıry, as follows: "According to every one's condi-
on, disposition, and age, the delay of baptism is
ıore advantageous, especially in the case of little
ıildren. Our Lord says, indeed, 'Do not forbid
ıem to come unto me.' Let them come, therefore,
hen they are grown up; let them come when they
ın learn, when they can be taught whether it is
ıey come. Let them be made Christians when they
ın know Christ."[1] Tertullian says, Let baptism not
e administered to little children, not a syllable
eing uttered by any previous writer to intimate that
ıey were baptized; therefore the baptism of infants
as universal in the time of Tertullian!! Until the
me of Tertullian, therefore, that is, during the
hole second century, there is no record of infant-
aptism; and in Tertullian's time, the only proof
ıat it was beginning to be practised, was the argu-
ent of Tertullian against it.

But *Origen*, who lived in the third century, shows
ıat it had become the practice of his day by the

[1] "Pro cujusque personæ conditione ac dispositione, etiam ætate
nctatio baptismi utilior est præcipue tamen circa parvulos. . . .
it quidem Dominus, Nollite illos prohibere ad me venire, veniant
go dum adolescunt, veniant dum discunt, dum quo veniunt do-
ntur; fiant Christiani, dum Christum nôsse potuerint."—*Ter-
llian de Baptismo: Bingham*, iii. 165.

following expressions: "Infants are baptized for the forgiveness of sins." "And because by the sacrament of baptism the pollutions of our birth are laid aside, therefore even little ones are baptized." "The Church hath received from Apostles the tradition that baptism should be given even to little ones."[1] The practice which was growing in the time of Tertullian was become general in the time of Origen.

This is the whole of the evidence in favour of infant-baptism up to the third century. During the first two centuries there is no symptom of it, not a line written in its favour. Early in the third century Tertullian opposed it, and later in the same century Origen speaks of it as an established custom. These facts seem to me to justify the judgment of Suicer "For the two first centuries no one received baptism except those who, being instructed in the faith and imbued with the doctrine of Christ, could testify that they believed: on account of those words, 'He that believeth and is baptized.' Afterwards the opinion prevailed that no one could be saved without being baptized."[2]

[1] "Parvuli baptizantur in remissionem peccatorum. . . . Et qui per baptismi sacramentum nativitatis sordes deponuntur, propterea baptizantur et parvuli. . . . Ecclesia ab apostolis traditionem suscepit etiam parvulis baptismum dare."—*Origen: Bingham* iii. 167.

[2] "Primis duobus sæculis nemo baptismum accipiebat nisi qui in fide instructus, et doctrinâ Christi imbutus, testari posset se credere, propter illa verba, 'Qui crediderit et baptizatus' fueri Postea opinio invaluit, neminem salvare posse, nisi qui baptizatus fuisset."—*Suicer in Bingham*, iii. 157.

II. Since it is asked, how it was possible for infant-baptism, if it was indeed a corruption introduced subsequently to the age of the Apostles, to begin so early, become so universal, last so long, and occasion no record of its origin, I answer that infant-communion, which all admit to be a corruption, was introduced as early, became as general, lasted for centuries, and grew up as silently. Of this let us now see the proofs.

1. The practice of giving the Lord's Supper to infants grew up early in the churches. "It is beyond dispute that as she (the Church) baptized infants, so she immediately admitted them to a participation of the Eucharist as soon as they were baptized."—*Bingham*, v. 313. "It is frequently mentioned in Cyprian, Austin, Innocentius, and Gennadius, writers from the third to the fifth century."—*Ib.* iii. 290.

2. "Cyprian often mentions it as the common practice."—*Ib.* v. 313. "The author of the 'Constitutions,' in his invitation of the faithful to the communion, bids mothers bring their children with them." "The author under the name of Dionysius says that children were admitted not only to baptism, but to the Eucharist."—*Ib.* v. 314.

3. Like infant-baptism, this lasted long in the churches. "If this matter needed proof, we might insist upon that known practice and custom in the ancient church of giving the Eucharist to infants, which continued in the Church for several ages. Maldonat confesses that it was in the Church for

six hundred years; and some of the authorities jus now alleged prove it to have continued two or thre ages more."—*Bingham,* iii. 290. "As soon as the ce remonies of baptism were finished, men were admitte to a participation of the Eucharist. And this wa observed not only with respect to adult persons, bu children also, and this continued to the ninth cen tury."—*Ib.* 332. "This custom was not abrogate in France till the twelfth century."—*Ib.* 316. "I continued somewhat longer in Germany and Switzer land."—*Ib.* 316. "And prevailed in the Gree Church down to the fourteenth century."—*Ib.* 317

4. Like infant-baptism, infant-communion wa thought to have apostolic sanction. "It were ab surd to think that the whole primitive Church Greek and Latin, from St. Cyprian's time, shoul give the communion to infants without imaginin any manner of necessity from any divine comman to do it."—*Ib.* 316.

Both these corruptions, which were equally earl and extensive in the churches, which lasted for man centuries, and grew up equally in silence, wer founded on similar reasons. Children were admitte to the Lord's table, because it was thought that the could not be saved without it.

St. Austin says, "They are children, but the become partakers of his table that they may hav life."[1] And Pope Innocent argues for the necessit of baptism to infants from the necessity of the

[1] "Infantes sunt, sed mensæ ejus participes fiunt ut habeant se vitam."—*Augustine: Bingham,* iii. 314.

eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man.[1] And there was the same opinion respecting the necessity of baptism to the salvation of infants. Origen says, "Infants are baptized for the forgiveness of sins." "Infants are baptized; because except one be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."[2] St. Cyprian and a council of sixty-six bishops determined that an infant comes to baptism "the more easily to receive forgiveness of sins, because they are not his own, but other men's sins which are forgiven him." Upon which Mr. Bingham remarks, "Here we have both the practice of the Church, and the reason of it together. Infants were baptized, because they were born in original sin, and needed baptism to cleanse them from the guilt and pollution of it."—*Bingham*, iii. 169.

The origin of the two corruptions in the churches is now apparent. All churches tend to spiritual decay, as each individual Christian does; and the deterioration, too natural to all churches under any circumstances, was accelerated to those early churches by their situation. Surrounded by vice, ignorance, and superstition, with few copies of the scriptures,

[1] "Parvulos æternæ vitæ præmiis etiam sine baptismatis gratiâ donari posse, per fatuum est nisi enim manducaverint sanguinem jus non habebunt vitam in semetipsis."—*Innocent; Bingham*, i. 315.

[2] "Baptizantur parvuli. Nisi enim quis renatus fuerit ea aquâ et spiritu non potest intrare in regnum cœlorum."—*Origen; Bingham*, iii. 167

and few other useful books, it was too easy to be tainted by the prevailing evils of their day. As piety decreased, their value for the forms of their religion might increase; and the sacraments, which at first were expressions of faith, became, in the general estimation, the channels of converting grace. The emblems of the body and blood of Jesus became in the view of multitudes, his body and blood; the sign of regeneration was now believed to be its source.

To this exaggerated view of the value of the sacraments the clergy would be favourable, because as they alone dispensed these elements, they thus became themselves the dispensers of divine grace, and the opinion of the clergy had the more weight with the churches, because they were probably almost the only educated portion of the Christian community; as, indeed, they were long after in the feudal kingdoms of Europe. Thus the clergy aided the popular delusion. Meanwhile passages which speak in exalted terms of the value of baptism, when it is the public expression of a saving faith, were supposed to speak of the intrinsic efficacy of the rite itself. To receive the Lord's Supper was to eat the flesh and to drink the blood of the Son of Man, and thereby to secure eternal life (John, vi. 53–55); and baptism was supposed to regenerate. Up to this time believers alone were baptized; but now two things naturally followed from this state of opinion. As the sacraments were thought to save those who received them, worldly and unconverted men sought

to receive them as nearly as possible to the hour of death; when they could entail little self-denial, and when their saving effects could not be neutralized by subsequent sins. Many, therefore, postponed their baptism, like Constantine, to the hour when death seemed to be approaching. On the other hand, these sources of salvation could no longer be justly withheld from infants. Unless children, like others, were born of water and the Spirit, they could not, as men supposed, enter the kingdom of God, and baptism would regenerate them; how could baptism be refused to them without cruelty? Unless children, like others, ate the flesh of Jesus and drank his blood, they had no life; and to eat his flesh would secure their everlasting life: what minister could refuse it to them? And so the admission of children to the sacraments was the natural corollary of the doctrine that the sacraments were intended to save men. This is the explanation of the origin of infant-baptism given by Suicer, who says: "The doctrine of the necessity of baptism to salvation was not the doctrine of the two first ages, but only an opinion taken up afterwards; upon which foundation the practice of infant-baptism was introduced into the church."—*Bingham*, ii. 163.

The general prevalence and long duration of infant-baptism appear thus to be no arguments for its authority or lawfulness. The practice of infant-communion crept into the churches as early, prevailed as extensively, endured for centuries, triumphed

as silently, and was embraced on the same grounds. The one bears exactly the same authority as the other. If the churches are bound to maintain infant-baptism, they are bound to sanction infant-communion too. If they have done right in discontinuing infant-communion, they must have equal liberty to discard infant-baptism. And so Mr Bingham, in effect, judges: "As no church," he says, "now thinks herself under any obligation to give the Eucharist to infants, because the primitive Church for eight hundred years did so, so neither does any church judge herself bound to give confirmation to infants from the same example."—*Bingham* iii. 296. And if both infant-communion and infant-confirmation have been generally repudiated, notwithstanding the general practice of the early churches, so infant-baptism, which is strictly similar, and sprang up from the same motives, ought to be rejected, notwithstanding that it has the same general practice to sanction it.

SECTION IX.—*The Argument in favour of Infant-baptism derived from the Number of those who practise it.*

The argument in favour of any doctrine from the numbers who support it is extremely uncertain. In very many instances truth has had to struggle against majorities. There were very few Christians and many heathens when the Apostles, aided by God

undertook to evangelize the world. Even now two hundred and fifty millions of professed Christians are few when compared with seven hundred millions of idolaters and Mahommedans. Of these professed Christians not one-third are Protestants. Of these Protestants, how few profess to believe the great doctrines of grace; how few support bible and missionary societies; how few condemn the union of the Church with the State; how few are Congregationalists; how few are true believers! "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." If Baptists are few, so have other classes been few, which have maintained, or do maintain, unpopular truths. In investigating the evidence for any doctrine, we should not dwell too much upon the numbers on either side, nor even upon, what is of more consequence, their character and talent; but rather ask the direct proof from scripture, and the reasonableness of the doctrine itself. Truth has often been found for a long time with the few against the many, though the many must eventually yield to it.

But the numbers of those who maintain that believers alone ought to be baptized, as compared with those who hold any other specific doctrine respecting Christian baptism, is not so small as is often assumed.

Compared with all other evangelical churches, the

number of Baptist churches may be few. But when all pædo-baptists are grouped into one multitude on one side, in opposition to the Baptists on the other, the contrast is superficial and delusive; the grounds upon which one class support infant-baptism being so contradictory to those advanced by another class, as to afford strong presumption against the truth of the doctrine which they jointly maintain.

The doctrine that believers ought to be baptized is maintained by almost all the Christian world upon the same grounds, namely, that Christ has commanded it, and that it was practised by the Apostles. All classes of pædo-baptists agree with Baptists in this: but when we examine upon what the belief of infant-baptism rests, we find no such consent among those who practise it. The direct evidence for it in the New Testament so completely fails, the arguments on its behalf, derived from the baptism of three believing households, from the holiness of a union between a Christian and an unbeliever in certain circumstances, from the kindness of Jesus to little children, and from the promises to parents are so weak, that though most pædo-baptist writers adduce them as subsidiary to their argument, few would venture to rest their case upon them.

The main grounds, upon which the practice rests and without which it would be discontinued, are thus stated by different classes. Many of the Anglican pædo-baptists, and many Episcopalians of the United States, would probably describe them

thus, "Sacraments are effectual signs of grace and God's good-will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us," Art. 25. "Baptism is a sign of regeneration or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly are grafted into the Church," Art. 27. "The inward and spiritual grace in baptism is a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness; for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace. There are required in persons to be baptized, repentance whereby they forsake sin, and faith whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament: but infants are baptized, because they promise both repentance and faith by their sureties; which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform."—See *Church Cat.* "Baptism is a sacrament; and if so, it must convey the grace annexed to it whenever no obstacle is placed in its way by the unworthiness of the recipient. For this has been the notion of the whole Christian church, that the sacraments are not bare signs, but do convey that also which they signify. Since, then, infants are incapable of opposing any obstacle, we must believe that the grace of baptism, a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness, is hereby conferred upon all who are brought to be engrafted into their Saviour by baptism. . . . And since infants are all alike incapable of opposing the divine benefit, and the wilfulness which they might hereafter show has no place there, and God

in his word has given us no ground for making any distinction between them, we must conclude, as the whole ancient church did, that the benefits of holy baptism are, by virtue of the sacrament itself, and of the divine institution, imparted to all infants." —*Tract* 67. All infants being thus worthy recipients, Canon 68 consistently enacts, "No minister shall refuse or delay to christen any child that is brought to the church to him upon Sundays or holydays to be christened. And if he shall refuse to christen, . . . he shall be suspended by the bishop of the diocese from his ministry by the space of three months." Anglicans then rest the right of infants to baptism mainly upon the fact that in some sense or other it regenerates them.

Against this both Presbyterians and Congregationalists properly protest. According to them the doctrine of baptismal regeneration is "unscriptural, false, and injurious to the souls of men." "That baptism is not the means of regeneration, appears from the evidence afforded by analogy, by the character of the gospel, by experience, by the statements and by the omissions of God's holy word." "The common tendency of this doctrine is to lead men to value the material form of religion more than its spiritual essence; to dispose them to rely on what is done for them by frail and sinful men, rather than on the wisdom and power of Him who is most holy and most merciful; to foster the presumption of those who are satisfied with themselves, and to deprive of hope the humble penitent. This

is not the tendency of the glorious gospel of our God and Saviour."—*Godwin*, 377, 396.

Presbyterians, therefore, and Congregationalists, sometimes state the grounds of infant-baptism thus: "Before the coming of Christ, the covenant of grace had been revealed; and under that covenant there existed a divinely instituted connection between children and their parents; the sign and seal of the blessings of the covenant was, by divine appointment, administered to children; and there can be produced no satisfactory evidence of this connection having been done away."—*Wardlaw*.

"If it be necessary that adult persons should make a profession of godliness, in order to their own admission to baptism, then undoubtedly is it necessary in order to their children being baptized on their account. For parents cannot convey to their children a right to this sacrament, by virtue of any qualifications lower than those requisite in order to their own right: *children being admitted to baptism only as being, as it were, parts and members of their parents.* And besides, the act of parents in offering up their children in a sacrament, which is a seal of the covenant of grace, is in them a solemn attending that sacrament as persons interested in the covenant, and a public manifestation of their approving and consenting to it, as truly as if they had then offered themselves up to God in that ordinance. Indeed it implies a renewed offering up themselves with their children, and devoting both jointly to God in covenant; *themselves with their*

children as parts of themselves."—Jon. Edwards' Works, vol. i. p. 476.

Thus this class of pædo-baptists found the right of infants to baptism upon their relation to their parents, children being, as it were, parts of their parents, and therefore within the covenant of grace because their parents are.

But many of the Congregationalists state their reasons for infant-baptism in terms like the following: "The principal argument for restricting baptism to the children of believers is founded upon the opinion that as the ancient sign of the covenant was administered to the seed of Abraham in testimony of his faith (the covenant being made with him and with his seed), so the modern sign of the covenant is to be administered to the seed of believers on account of the faith of their parents. . . . The argument in favour of the transmission of the sign of the Christian covenant from the believing parent to his children, founded upon the transmission of the sign of the Abrahamic covenant through the hereditary line of succession in the posterity of Abraham, fails in almost every particular. . . . The general opinion that baptism is substituted for circumcision as a kind of hereditary seal of the covenant of grace, appears to be ill-sustained by scriptural evidence, and to be exposed to some very serious, if not absolutely fatal, objections. . . . . A respected writer, indeed, says, 'Under that covenant there existed a divinely instituted connection between children and their parents;' but of this connection, which appears to

me to be the hinge of the whole arrangement, he offers, so far as I can find, no satisfactory evidence, nor even any evidence at all. The sign of the Abrahamic covenant was given to every child, as it appears to me, on account, not of his immediate connection with his parents, but of his remote connection with the head of the covenant. . . . Ahaziah was circumcised not because he was the son of the wicked Ahab, or the more wicked Jezebel, but because he was of the covenanted lineage of the faithful Abraham. . . . The privilege then is resolved into the connection between Abraham and his posterity, and no other seems to be recognised in the Abrahamic covenant. . . . The argument of the Abrahamic covenant, if it apply at all, applies to the grandchildren of believers as well as to their children, and so on to the third and fourth generations, and through an infinite series. . . . In all arguments which assume any distinction of privileges among children on account of the faith of their parents we must disclaim all participation."—*Halley*, 530, 531, 536, 537, 539, 533.

Repudiating, then, the supposed connection between parents and children as a spurious ground on which to rest the practice of infant-baptism, many Congregationalists would state its grounds thus: "There are those who baptize all applicants whatsoever, provided the application does not appear to be made scoffingly and profanely, and all children offered by their parents, guardians, or others, who may have

the care of them. . . . The first class maintain that baptism is exclusively the privilege of true believers; the second, that by virtue of a covenant relation between parents and children, it belongs also to the children of believers; the third, that as no restriction is imposed on baptism in the New Testament, none ought to be imposed by the ministers of the gospel. . . . Our commission is to disciple as many as we can by baptizing and by teaching them. . . . Adhering to the literality of the commission, we admit no exceptions, either in the baptizing or the teaching, regarding the extent of our ability as the only limit of our obedience."—*Halley*, 496, 497, 578.

But to these a larger class of Presbyterians, with some Congregationalists, would reply, respecting such indiscriminate baptism, "What is the amount of its value to the children of unbelievers? what the benefit they derive from it? . . . I regard these statements as not only unscriptural, but perilously so to the constitution and character of the New Testament Church, as tending, if consistently followed out, to undermine and destroy it as a spiritual and separate community. . . . The principles avowed, if fairly followed out, go far to obliterate the distinction between the church and the world."—*Wardlaw*, 290, 291, 284.

"A full induction of instances warrants the conclusion that the New Testament knows no adult baptism irrespective of a credible profession of faith. . . . Dr. H. is of course entitled to hold and defend

his opinion, and we are equally entitled to affirm that one more utterly unfounded we have seldom met with."—*Wilson*, 375.

Besides, then, the opinion of the Baptists there are three distinct and incompatible opinions upon which infant-baptism is made to rest by three great classes; and although no accuracy can be attained on these points, yet let us make an approximate estimate of the number of churches espousing these different opinions in Great Britain and America.

	Great Britain.	United States.	Total.
Baptist Churches.....	1,825	7,130	8,955
Anglicans and Episcopalians maintaining that baptism in some sense regenerates children	13,000	950	13,950
Presbyterians maintaining that children are to be baptized on account of the faith of their parents.....	3,000	3,744	6,744
Congregationalists maintaining that baptism should be indiscriminate to all children	2,570	1,300	3,870

These figures, though not accurately stating the present numbers of the churches in Great Britain and the United States, and still less the numbers of these denominations throughout the world, are yet accurate enough to illustrate the argument in favour of infant-baptism derived from numbers.

According to this argument, which I am opposing, the Baptists are wrong in their peculiar opinion, because a majority of Christians are against them. If

this be true, then any other class must be in error when the majority are against them. Anglicans and American Episcopalians, who number 13,950 churches, must be wrong when they found the right of all infants to baptism on the idea that baptism regenerates, because 19,569 churches of Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists, reject that idea. The 6744 Presbyterian churches must be in error when they declare that the children of believers have a right to baptism in virtue of the faith of their parents, all other children being excluded, because 26,775 churches of Episcopalians, Congregationalists, and Baptists, deny the transmission of that right from the parent to the child; and the 3870 Congregationalist churches, which advocate the indiscriminate baptism of infants, as a corollary of the indiscriminate baptism of adults, must be in error because they are opposed in this notion by 29,649 churches of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Baptists. May not then the Baptists reply with confidence to those who say to them, "You are wrong, because you are opposed by the majority," You are all in the same predicament? Baptismal regeneration, the Anglican foundation of infant-baptism, is erroneous, because it is opposed by the majority of Christians. The transmission of the rights of the parent to the child, the Presbyterian foundation, is erroneous, because opposed by the majority; and the right of all serious adult applicants to baptism, which is the Congregational foundation, is no less erroneous, because no less opposed by the majority. And if Baptists are

in error in their peculiar views, because they are a minority, so Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists, are all in error, because they also are severally minorities.

But further; since, according to this doctrine, a minority must be in the wrong, a majority must, consequently, be in the right; and Baptists appear, upon closer investigation, to be in the right on this ground. 1. All hold, with Baptists, that unbaptized believers ought to be baptized. 2. A majority hold, with them, that baptism does not regenerate. 3. A majority hold, with them, that the faith of the parent is not the foundation of the child's right to baptism. 4. A majority hold, with them, that the right of all adults to baptism is not the foundation of the baptism of infants; and 5. A majority hold, with them, that the promises to parents, the baptism of households, the alleged holiness of the children of a Christian parent, and the blessing pronounced upon some little children by our Lord, are not sufficient grounds for infant-baptism. Although, therefore, the majority deny the Baptist conclusion, the majority admit the Baptist arguments from which that conclusion legitimately follows. The Baptist arguments, tried by this test of majorities, are sound, and therefore the legitimate conclusion from those arguments must be sound also.

Nay, tried by this test, the whole doctrine of infant-baptism must fall. For that doctrine, if true, must rest upon some foundation; but by this test it has none. The direct evidence from the New Testa-

ment is thought by the majority to be insufficient, and therefore is so. Baptismal regeneration, for the same reason, is no foundation for it; and a supposed covenant with believing parents, and a supposed right of all sincere applicants to baptism, are, by the same test, equally exploded. No foundation of infant-baptism can be adduced which the majority of Christians do not repudiate; that doctrine has, therefore, no foundation; and the Baptists must be right in rejecting it.

A majority of Christians, indeed, uphold infant-baptism, but since their arguments for it are mutually destructive, their common conclusion must be invalidated. Most persons superficially look no further than the common conclusion; but what is the value of a conclusion built on contradictory reasonings? No majority can make it plausible. If all agreed in the proofs of the divine institution of infant-baptism, then their authority would be more formidable to their dissentient brethren. But how stands the case? One class believes that infants ought to be baptized because baptism regenerates; which reason being erroneous, the practice of infant-baptism, if built on that alone, must be erroneous too. A second class believes that infants ought to be baptized because they are included with their parents in the covenant of grace; and this reason also being erroneous, infant-baptism, if built upon it, must be likewise erroneous. A third class believes that infants ought to be baptized because all applicants ought to be, and since this reason also is erro-

neous, if infant-baptism rests upon it, it must be likewise erroneous. Since, then, each of these false reasons is unable to sanction the practice, all of them together are unable to sanction it; and infant-baptism, which remains without a single solid foundation, must be treated as an error, though upheld by the conclusion of the majority.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EFFECTS OF BAPTISM.

Being created to the end that we may love and serve our Creator, we have, on the contrary, rebelled against him. For this we must obtain pardon through the Lord Jesus Christ, who has borne the sins of all believers in his own body on the tree, 1 Pet. ii. 24; 2 Cor. v. 21. But as those only receive the forgiveness of their sins who trust in Christ, all men need the influence of the Holy Spirit through which alone they can obtain saving faith, John, iii. 16, 36; Rom. iii. 19-28; John, vi. 44; Acts, ii. 47; xi. 21; xiii. 48; 1 Cor. iii. 5. All are thus called to give themselves up to the service of God the Father, through faith in God the Son, by the aid of God the Holy Spirit; to die to sin, and begin a new life of devotedness to the Triune God; to yield themselves up to God their Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, and King; to the Lord Jesus Christ, their Redeemer and Mediator; and to the Holy Spirit, their Sanctifier: to consecrate themselves to the Triune God.

All this must be done openly. Since God is our Father, we must honour him as such; since the Lord Jesus Christ has died to save us, we must confess him before men; since the Holy Spirit has converted and sanctified us, we must acknowledge his work. Hence, some solemn and public profession of faith in the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, naturally follows from a real subjection of heart to the Father through the Son by the Holy Spirit. The Church of Christ, likewise, which is the society of Christ's disciples, ought not to receive into fellowship as brethren those who would disgrace it either by false doctrine or by a discreditable life. Each church, therefore, should ask some public profession of faith and of consecration to God from all its members before they are admitted. Both these objects are secured by the appointed rite of baptism. As Christ will confess us openly before the universe, if we are his true disciples (Matt. xxv.), so we ought to own him openly before men, Matt. x. 32. We must confess him everywhere, before all men, through our whole lives: and it is right that we should enter on this life by a public and solemn act of profession. Baptism is that appointed act. Each Christian confesses Christ at the Lord's Supper. But this Supper, while expressing faith and discipleship, does not distinctly express either the renunciation of sin or consecration in a new life to the Triune God. In the Supper, likewise, the whole Church confesses Christ, and each believer is undistinguished from the rest: but baptism is an individual and often a solitary act,

in which, before the church and before the world, each convert avows his repentance and faith. By his burial in water he professes to die to all sin as Christ died for it, to renounce it wholly and for ever. And in his rising from the water he professes to begin a new spiritual life, as Christ has risen from the grave to a life of glory. And as he is baptized "unto the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," he thus professes his consecration to the service of the Triune God, his Maker, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

By faith, expressed in baptism, each sincere convert confesses Christ so as to wash away his sins (Acts, xxii. 16), to receive pardon (Acts, ii. 38), to put on the robe of Christ's righteousness (Gal. iii. 27), and to secure salvation, 1 Pet. iii. 21. And as he confesses Christ he will be confessed by Christ at the last day, Matt. x. 32; Rom. x. 8–10.

I. Let us now consider the influence which the baptism of a believer is likely to have upon himself, upon the church of which he becomes a member, and upon spectators.

It is a solemn moment when a person thus, before the assembled multitude, professes, by a symbolical act more expressive than words, to renounce all sin, to die to it as Christ died for it, and to rise again to a new life of universal holiness, consecrated for ever to the ennobling and joyful service of the Triune God. Christians dishonour Christ and injure themselves when they permit those with whom they live and act, not to know that Christ is their

master and his word their rule. Such concealment tempts to sinful compliances with the world: but even if these are escaped, that concealment is an injury to the cause of Christ. He has himself said, "He that is not with me is against me," Matt. xii. 30. And the truth of this is evident: he who is indifferent to Christ, and does not trust in him, declares by his conduct to the world that they may do without Christ, despises his sacrifice, denies his claims, justifies universal disbelief, and is therefore his enemy. He who conceals his faith does in effect nearly the same thing. Thought by others to be an unbeliever, and yet esteemed for his social virtues, he leads others to think that they, like him, can be good enough without Christ. But when a believer is immersed unto the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to show that he dies to sin and rises again to a new life, consecrated to God through Christ by the Spirit, then no one can mistake his principle, he becomes avowedly a follower of Christ. After this act all men have a right to say to him, "By your own solemn deed you are bound to put off every inconsistent habit, to renounce every unchristian temper, to eradicate every fault, to live in all things according to the will of God." By this act he has made it the duty of all his fellow-Christians, with whom he associates, to admonish, warn, animate, encourage, approve, love, and pray for him as a brother. A thousand checks to sin and a thousand aids to godliness are that day assumed. Faith, hope, and love, are likely to be confirmed. Henceforth,

more bold in Christ's service, and more decided in principle, he is likely to be more useful in the world: and in after-life how often must this deliberate act of self-dedication to God recur to his thoughts to repel temptation and to strengthen every holy principle within him?

If the nerves of the timid may be shaken by the solemn act of dedication to Christ which fills stronger believers with holy joy and gratitude that they are permitted thus to honour him, this very tremor is calculated to impress indelibly on their minds the engagements into which they then entered, and to render their after-course more devoted and more consistent.

To witness the baptism of a believer must be useful to members of the church. Another soul is rescued by Almighty grace from perdition, and the church may share with angels in their joy over a repentant sinner. Another soldier enlists in Christ's army, and his fellow-soldiers may renew their resolution to fight the good fight of faith. At that sight experienced Christians must revive their old impressions when they first gave themselves to the Lord; backsliders, moved to compunction at witnessing a faith so contrasted with their faithless wanderings, may repent; young Christians must rejoice to admit companions like themselves to the brotherhood of the saints; and the prayers and praises of many must ascend as an acceptable sacrifice to God.

But there are other spectators there who are likely to derive benefit from the scene. Baptism is

calculated to check those worldly and frivolous persons who might inconsiderately ask admission to a church. A person who intends to continue in sin could not like thus solemnly to renounce it; and, without intending to lead a new life, would not wish publicly to profess such intention. Conscience would thus keep many from joining the church when no secular advantages are connected with it, and when admission must be sought by a deliberate and public falsehood. But others would rather feel themselves strongly impelled to seek such admission. How can careless persons see one of their acquaintances renouncing sin, and becoming a servant of Christ, admitted to the fellowship of saints, and welcomed by many Christians as a brother, without feeling grieved and alarmed that they have no such place among Christ's disciples? Belonging to no church, and making no profession of faith in him, how can they think themselves members of the universal church for which he gave himself to death, and which he loves with an everlasting love? Especially on such an occasion may the children of pious parents feel their condition as unbaptized. Dedicated to God from their infancy, and trained in his ways, they have received instruction and exhortation from their parents; they have worshipped with believers and seen Christian examples from their childhood; and now, while other young persons are baptized as believers, and welcomed by the church, they are without baptism, without profession of faith, without a place in any Christian church, without even a

Christian name. Is it the fear of the world, or the love of pleasure, or habitual frivolity, which hinders? Whatever it be, they do not confess him, and have no reason to think that he will confess them, Matt. x. 32. They appear to be unregenerate, and if they die so, will probably be excluded from the Church triumphant as they now are from the Church on earth. This may well urge many to seek decision of principle, and give themselves up to the Lord. Children in the various schools connected with the church may be no less impressed when they see some of their companions turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, while they remain impenitent and unsaved. If any persons are convinced of sin, and beginning to seek salvation, what can be more proper to decide their wavering minds than to see a joyful decision of mind in some who were lately as far from piety as themselves? And if any who are young and gay think religion to be gloomy, and plead for a little longer indulgence, what is more likely to convert them than to see others as young as themselves, as cheerful, and perhaps more intelligent, scorning the servitude to frivolous pleasures, make a joyful surrender of themselves to the service of God, aided by the prayers of hundreds, and cheered by the affectionate sympathy of all the children of God?

But, besides the influence which the baptism of an individual must have on various classes, the Church derives no small advantage from the institution generally. The mixture of the Church and the

world has been one of the most fatal evils which have hindered the progress of the gospel. Baptism is in some degree a preventive of this evil. I have already noticed, that few worldly persons, without strong inducements of a worldly kind, would wish to make so solemn a profession of self-dedication to God falsely. But should they wish to do so, it is not in their power. The church, which is the judge of the qualifications of candidates for membership, has no right to admit any one to membership if the baptismal profession would be palpably false. Ordered to put away from themselves each wicked person, they are virtually forbidden to receive such (1 Cor. v. 11–13), and are therefore bound to require from each candidate a sound creed and irreproachable conduct. It is not the business of one man to read the heart of another, nor ought churches to pretend to decide upon the conversion of each candidate for baptism, but they may require evangelical views and godly habits from each. And this requirement manifestly tends to keep the churches pure. When a church is thus composed of members who have all made this solemn profession, they may refer to it with powerful effect in all their church-meetings and in their intercourse with one another. I know not how other churches can apply with any confidence or force the apostolic references to baptism; but those churches which are composed of persons baptized as believers may stir each other up by the words of Paul, "Know ye not that so many of us as have been baptized unto Christ Jesus have

been baptized unto his death; therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life; for if we have been *συμφύτοι*,[1] connected in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. . . . Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead," Rom. vi. 3–5; Col. ii. 12. Each has a right to expect from all, that they mortify every sinful temper, and live in the practice of all godliness, because they all entered the church with this profession.

Neither this nor any other rite can secure the spirituality of a church, nor even hinder its defection. A thousand other influences are in operation simultaneously with this. Should a church practise infant-baptism, it may, notwithstanding the noxious tendency of this error, abound in piety; and no less a church, which is sound in its view of baptism, may be unsound in doctrine and relaxed in discipline, its members without spirituality, and its services without life. But among the means which tend to prevent such declension in churches, baptism clearly holds a place. Assuming, then, that a church is flourishing in knowledge and in grace, the duty of repelling from membership those who have not professed, either at baptism, or from mis-

[1] "*Συμφύομαι*, to be naturally or necessarily connected, *ἀλλήλοις εἰς ἕν, εἰς ταὐτο.*"—*Liddell.*

taking our Lord's commands with respect to baptism in some other way, their repentance, faith, and dedication to the service of God, would be fulfilled, which would maintain the purity of the church; and the world would see a Christian society separated from itself, not more by their evangelical views than by their consistent godliness.

II. On the other hand, the effects of infant-baptism have been very opposite.

1. Its first effect is to abolish almost entirely in any church and in any nation the baptism of believers. It is not an addition to the baptism of believers, but supersedes it; because when a nation adopts the profession of Christianity, almost all its children are baptized, and there remain no adults unbaptized. The consequence is, that all the effects of the baptism of believers vanish with it. A baptism of dedication, not sanctioned by Christ, and of which no instance is found in the New Testament, has abolished the baptism of profession instituted by Christ, and alone declared to be practised by Apostles. The intense emotions with which converts might give themselves in baptism to the service of the Redeemer are precluded; and the Church, the congregation, the world, lose the impressions which might be derived from witnessing the act by which believers, lately turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, surrender themselves to the service of the Redeemer. Christ's baptism, with all its blessings, is set aside to introduce another baptism derived from false analogies

and forced inferences, of which neither Christ nor his Apostles have said one word. Through the baptism of unconscious infants, the solemn, affecting, and salutary baptism of repentance, faith, and self-dedication to God, has nearly vanished from the churches.

2. What have the churches gained by this substitution? I can find no benefit whatever derived from infant-baptism by infants, or their parents, or the churches, or the world. Infants altogether unconscious are thus dedicated to God, falsely by unbelieving parents, and sincerely by parents who believe. In the former case, parents sin by an act of hypocrisy; in the second, they do what they would do without baptism, and no more. But what does the infant gain? Without baptism he might receive parental training, be placed under a pious master, listen to earnest preaching, join in the prayers of the congregation, associate with godly friends, be instructed at a good school, become a member of the pastor's bible-class, and attend the prayer-meetings of the congregation. From what means of instruction is the unbaptized child of Christian parents excluded which would be open to the baptized child? Under the Mosaic economy, which was exclusive, circumcision admitted the child to the temple-worship, to the teaching of the rabbins or priests, to the passover and other festivals, to association with the chosen people, to the use of all the means of instruction then in the world, from which the uncircumcised were excluded; but under

the Christian economy, which is meant for the world, there is no such exclusion. The unbaptized child has all the advantages which were possessed by the circumcised child, and many more; nay, further, he has all the advantages possessed by the baptized child. In no respect does the first differ from the second, except that he does not bear a name which by itself is delusive and worse than worthless. The unauthorized baptism of infants cannot be shown to render to them any service whatever. It renders no advantage to their parents. By the complete subjection of a child to the will of his parents, by his imploring helplessness, by his docility and artlessness, by the sacred trust which God has put in the hands of his parents, by the parental love with which he has implored them, are they bound and urged to dedicate him from his infancy to God, to instruct and train him for God, and guide him by precept and example to the knowledge and love of his Maker. Can baptism add anything to these obligations? Does it in fact? Even parents who have sprinkled their children feel the force of these natural motives day by day a thousand times more than they do the influence of that religious sprinkling. Pious parents do not need this new inducement to educate their children well; ungodly parents cannot feel its force. On the other hand, the actual practice of pædo-baptist churches too clearly proves that the churches themselves take very little interest in the ceremony. Baptism, except as far as superstition has invested it with imaginary

spiritual power, seems to me to have dwindled into a formality.

Yet even this formality is fraught with the elements of positive mischief. For since all who are baptized are in some sense disciples (Matt. xxviii. 19), all baptized infants are thought to become Christians. The Anglican churches say of them that they are "members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven."—*Church Catechism.* "The visible society which God was pleased to institute amongst men . . . since the day of Pentecost, has consisted of baptized families enlarging to many baptized nations."—*M'Neile's Lectures*, 14. "It is undeniable, that in Scripture the visible company of the baptized is called the Church."—*Ibid.* 18. In the baptismal service each Anglican minister says of each child brought to him to be sprinkled, "We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock:" and adds, "This child is regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's church." Whereupon he further says, "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy Church." "Once united in the sacrament to Christ, the child becomes mystically or sacramentally one of that body of which Christ is the head. . . . The formal mystical union takes places individually at the moment, and in the act of the mystical washing away of sin."—*Hoare on Baptism*, 262.

All this the children within the Anglican establishment are subsequently taught by the Catechism. Each child in all the parish schools, and in every Anglican family, throughout the whole land, is taught to say, in answer to the question, "Who gave you this name? My godfathers and godmothers in my baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Hence the children grow up to think themselves Christians, and their parents think them the same. The Church and the world are inseparably blended; the Church swells into the nation, the nation becomes the Church.

"We hold," says Hooker, "that seeing there is not any man of the Church of England but the same man is also a member of the commonwealth, nor any member of the commonwealth which is not also of the Church of England, . . . one and the same multitude may in such sort be both."—Book viii.

By this means interminable confusion has spread over the churches. The Church is in the New Testament Christ's bride, which he intends to present to himself without fault (Eph. vi. 25–27), the company of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven (Heb. xii. 23); but now there is a new society, unknown in the New Testament, which men call "the visible church," another body of Christ, another bride, composed of baptized nations. The churches which were composed of those alone, who were in reality, or in appearance, saints and faithful

brethren, are now composed of all who were sprinkled in infancy without their own consent or knowledge, of all opinions and of all characters. So we hear of Christian nations and Christian parliaments, without any reference whatever to character, or even to any explicit profession, solely in virtue of this infant sprinkling. Sometimes, also, we hear of "good Christians" and of "bad Christians." The passages of scripture which urge Christians to separate from the world, have lost their meaning. There is no "world" in England; the "world" is the Church; and Christians must not separate from the Church. Scripture insists upon the necessity of a new birth; but with what force can its appeal come to those who have been already in baptism "regenerated with the Holy Spirit?"—*Baptismal Service.*

The awful warnings of scripture to the unconverted are limited to heathens and Jews; the privileges exclusively belonging to saints are ascribed to all who bear the Christian name. By this unhappy practice of infant-baptism all distinctness of warning is banished from many pulpits. I have heard men appealed to in the pulpit as "CHRISTIANS living in known sin; Christians neglecting the bible and prayer; Christians ungodly in heart and life." Addressed as Christians, they could not think that they needed a complete change. A developement of latent grace, the revival of a dormant piety, was all that they could require. Already regenerate Christians, enjoying the intercession of Christ for

them, and subjects of the common influences of the Spirit, a little improvement at the close of life would surely suffice to save them.

An indistinctness of this kind is often perceptible in the pulpits of Anglican ministers, who reject the notion that baptism generally effects the spiritual regeneration of infants. Baptism must do something; it must make the children in some sense Christians, "members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven." And that is enough to enfeeble fatally all appeals to the unconverted. But infant-baptism has very naturally led to the worse notion of baptismal regeneration; to the notion that the one spiritual regeneration necessary to salvation, and which is itself the source of salvation, is accomplished by baptism. Since the scriptures declare that persons are to be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts, ii. 38), that they should be "baptized and wash away their sins" (Acts, xxii. 16), that they are "buried with Christ, and rise with him" in baptism (Col. ii. 12), that the baptized "put on Christ" (Gal. iii. 27), and that they are "saved" by baptism (1 Pet. iii. 21); if these passages are applied to infants, it is very difficult to avoid the conclusion that they are renewed and justified in baptism. Believers being required to exercise faith before they come to baptism, it is easy to understand, with reference to them, that baptism is in all these cases put for the profession of faith, for that real faith which, being proved by confession, is the work of the Spirit, and

secures remission of sins; but as infants are incapable of faith, if these passages apply to them, they must express the results effected by their baptism, in other words, their baptismal regeneration. By this doctrine baptized nations are regenerated and justified in infancy; there is no such thing as a regeneration effected by the Spirit of God through his word, James, i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23. Except in very rare cases, none are justified by faith, for they are justified in infancy. And the following tractarian doctrine triumphs: "The sacraments, not preaching, are the sources of divine grace."—*Tracts*, vol. i. p. 4. "They are the only justifying rites or instruments of conveying the atonement."—*Tract* 90, p. 46. "Regeneration in baptism is the very spirit and essence of the whole teaching of the Church."—*Plain Words*, p. 21. "The two sacraments of the gospel are those which directly communicate Christ to the soul."—*British Critic, July* 1843, p. 51. "In baptism itself two very different causes are combined, the one God himself, the other a creature which he has thought fit to hallow for this end."—*Pusey Tract*, 67. "Regeneration is the being born of water and of the Spirit, or by God's Spirit again moving on the face of the waters, and sanctifying them for our cleansing, and cleansing us thereby."—*Ibid.*

"And is not this fundamental error," says a pious Anglican writer, "the mighty mischief which is now desolating our Church? All the evils which have ever been ascribed to the doctrines of grace, with all

their perversions and all their misapprehensions, must sink into insignificance when compared with those which daily and palpably issue from the assertion of the general efficacy of baptism in all who partake of that rite." "As Bishop Jewell asserts, Verily, to ascribe felicity or remission of sin, which is the inward work of the Holy Ghost, unto any manner of outward action whatsoever, it is a superstitious, a gross, and a Jewish error." "Thus confounding circumstantials with essentials, all the mischiefs of delusion follow, and the Christian body, thus feeding on wind instead of wholesome nutriment, is starved, and faints, and decays."—*Budd*, 9, 10, 6. But so long as infant-baptism continues to be practised, this "gross superstition," this "mighty mischief," must continue, because it springs necessarily from the application of the scriptural statements respecting the baptism of believers to the baptism of infants; and while infant-baptism lasts, there being only one baptism enacted by Christ, they must be so applied.

CHAPTER V.

PRACTICAL INFERENCES.

SECTION I.—*Some Reasons why a Person who renounces Pædo-baptism, after having made a Profession of Religion, ought to be baptized.*

THERE are two things in baptism, the form and he reality: the form is immersion in water; the reality is a profession of repentance and faith, of which the form is significant. One who was sprinkled in his infancy has not, in his passive reception of that rite, either complied with the form or fulfilled the reality of baptism: he has not been immersed, and he has made no baptismal profession of faith. He is, therefore, unbaptized: and any one who in these circumstances renounces the practice of pædo-baptism as erroneous, knows that he is so.

As there is no instance in the New Testament of any person who was converted to Christ after he commissioned his disciples to baptize, coming to the Lord's table unbaptized, a person who should do so

now would place himself in a situation unlike that of all the Christians during the ministry of the Apostles. It is safer to conform to the apostolic custom, and to attend the Lord's table as baptized rather than as unbaptized.

A person sprinkled in infancy may, indeed, have professed his faith in Christ by coming to the Lord's table, and in other ways; but he has never made a baptismal profession of faith according to Christ's commands both implied and expressed, Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark, xvi. 16; John, iii. 5; Acts, ii. 38. His confession of Christ in one appointed way seems to be no valid reason for neglecting to confess him in another concurrent way, which is no less unequivocally prescribed. Like the pædo-paptist, the Quaker might profess his faith in Christ, in word and deed, be avowedly a disciple of Christ, and openly seek fellowship with his people. Like Mr. J. J. Gurney, he may have defended the gospel by his pen, promoted it by his preaching, and illustrated it by his Christian virtues; and yet, when such a man recognises that Christ has enjoined upon all his followers to the end of time the baptism of water, as emblematic of the baptism of the Spirit, he is held by all evangelical churches bound to honour Christ by complying with his command to be baptized. Every Christian minister would advise him to be baptized; every convert to the doctrine of water-baptism in such circumstances complies with the command. It is not because, then, for the first time he professes to believe in Christ. His faith may

have been active, his conduct devoted for years, but he has learned a command of Christ with which he was before unacquainted, and he wishes to fulfil it. He is baptized, although he has long professed his faith in Christ, because he wishes to honour the ordinance of Christ. Now what is the difference between his case and that of the person who, after a similar course of discipleship, renounces pædo-baptism? Both are equally unbaptized, and both have openly served Christ. There is no difference between them in this matter. Why should the one be baptized and the other remain unbaptized? Why should all ministers and all churches claim this act of obedience from the one disciple, and not equally demand it from the other?

Upon this point the reason which our Lord assigned for his baptism by the hands of John seems to me conclusive. The following is the narrative of the transaction: "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness," Matt. iii. 13–15.

"There was no particular precept in the Old Testament requiring this, but he chose to give the sanction of his example to the baptism of John as to a divine ordinance."—*Barnes.*

"Nor could it be more effectually shown how great an honour is due to the rites instituted by

God, than when Christ himself commended their use to us by his own example."—*Grotius.*

He came unto John to be baptized, "that he might honour John's ministry, acknowledge his commission to baptize, and might confirm the institution of baptism by water," saying, "Thus it becomes us, me, and my disciples according to my example, to fulfil all righteousness, to do whatsoever is just, fit, and requisite, in our circumstances. It becometh every messenger of God, and even every follower of mine, to observe every divine appointment and to honour every divine ordinance."—*Benson.*

"We may learn from this example of Christ that being baptized with the Holy Ghost will excuse none for contempt or neglect of baptism by water; because it is the revealed will of God that all the members of his church should come under that ordinance: so as there is a fulfilling of righteousness in our case, as well as in Christ's. . . . He that erreth through ignorance will correct his error upon better information."—*Poole.*

"They who are of greatest attainments in gifts and graces should yet bear their testimony to instituted ordinances by a humble and diligent attendance upon them, that they may give a good example to others."—*Henry.*

"We never find that Jesus spoke of himself in the plural number, and must, therefore, allow that he meant John also and all the servants of God in a subordinate sense. It became Christ, as our surety

and our example, perfectly to fulfil all righteousness; and it becometh us to walk in all God's commandments and ordinances without exception."—*Scott*.

When the Quaker, on recognising the doctrine of water-baptism, after, it may be, years of Christian profession, is baptized, he fulfils an act of righteousness after this example of Christ. Exactly in the same degree does each unbaptized disciple of Christ, who is baptized, fulfil it: in honouring baptism he honours Christ who has instituted it; and this seems exactly the point of obedience which his example was intended to enforce. Undoubtedly it should lead his followers generally to honour all his ordinances; but that which it especially teaches is that when, like him, they have no need of baptism, they should, like him, honour it. Our Lord was now thirty years of age, perfect in holiness, and openly serving God in all holy obedience, yet neither his age, nor his character, nor his zeal and piety, known to all who knew him, hindered him from setting this example to others of respect for baptism as an ordinance of God. If, therefore, any persons have made a profession of religion as many years as Jesus had, but are still unbaptized, they may see in his conduct the course which they ought to take. Baptism, as an ordinance of Christ, ought to be honoured by all his disciples, and how can the unbaptized honour it, except by being baptized?

In studying the example of Christ we further learn to consider the influence which our example may have on others. Baptism, as a profession of

faith appointed by Christ, being of great importance to the Church, it is necessary that it should be earnestly commended to the attention of unconverted persons, whose consciences it is well calculated to awaken to a wholesome activity—all such ought to begin their religious profession by being baptized. But with what effect can unbaptized persons urge the duty of baptism on others? Actions teach more than words; and if those who hold the immersion of believers to be the only baptism appointed by Christ, do yet remain unbaptized, the world in general must judge that they also may safely remain in the same condition. You urge upon some young Christian the duty of baptism, but he may answer, "Why should I encounter the self-denial of baptism since you have escaped it?" There is a difference between the cases, I admit. But will those who wish for a plea by which they may escape a self-denying duty recognise this difference? If not then your neglect of baptism will confirm theirs.

Especially ought this last consideration to weigh with ministers whose office it is to lead men to a baptismal profession of faith. "It becomes us to countenance and encourage everything that is good by pattern as well as precept. Christ often mentioned John and his baptism with honour: which that he might do the better he was himself baptized. Thus Jesus began first to do and then to teach, and his ministers must take the same method." —*Henry.*

A minister ought to be baptized, first, that he

may be able effectually to recommend baptism to those who are converted through his ministry from a life of ungodliness to a life of faith; secondly, because those who wish to be baptized by him might feel a doubt as to the validity of baptism by an unbaptized minister, and might fear to receive baptism at his hands, unless he were baptized.

It is, moreover, well known that many churches admit to the Lord's table none who are unbaptized. In my opinion this practice is erroneous: but as it is sanctioned by the practice of nearly all Christian churches, because nearly all reject unbaptized persons from the Lord's table, it should be respected as the result of conscientious conviction, rather than be treated as an offence. With these churches, therefore, each person agreeing with them respecting the doctrine of baptism ought to be in communion, if he can be so without compromise of principle. Now, since communion with them in the Lord's Supper no more implies a sanction of their exclusive practice than a similar communion with a pious church within the Establishment, or with a pious Presbyterian church, or with a pious Wesleyan church, would sanction the particular opinions of these churches, it ought to be sought: and the more so as their brotherly intercourse with Christians of more liberal views tends to render them more liberal. But it can only be obtained by baptism; and the act of baptism being in itself right, it must be also right to enter into communion with such churches in this way.

Considerations of this kind have so weighed with those who have studied this question, that of all the ministers who are known to have renounced the doctrine of pædo-baptism, very few I suppose could be found who have not been themselves baptized.

On the other hand, I know nothing which can be alleged against this course except that it is calculated to excite prejudice, and thereby lessen usefulness. But this is, when well considered, an argument in its favour. For why should the act of baptism excite more prejudice than the maintenance of the corresponding opinion? The reason is, because the act teaches the doctrine more publicly and more influentially. If you avoid baptism, others will avoid it; if you accept it, others will accept it. But these are reasons for your baptism, and not against it.

There remains nothing else to allege against it, except that it may expose you to some measure of contempt; and if you think of the cross of Christ, you will not shrink from this lighter cross.

Section II.—*Reasons for Free Communion.*

As many Baptists, knowing that infant sprinkling is not the baptism enjoined by Christ, and that pædo-baptists are therefore unbaptized, think that they ought not to be admitted to the table of the Lord in Baptist churches, I will now state some of

the considerations which appear to establish an opposite conclusion. Like the strict Baptists, I believe each person who has been merely sprinkled in infancy is unbaptized, because the external act of baptism is immersion, and that act is meant to be a profession of repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The person sprinkled in infancy has neither been immersed, nor has he made through his reception of the sprinkled water any profession whatever of discipleship, he is therefore wholly unbaptized; and it is regarding him simply as an unbaptized believer that I advocate his right to a place at the Lord's table in a Baptist church. It is of no moment to the settlement of this question whether pædo-baptists would repudiate or not the proposal to admit them to communion with Baptist churches as unbaptized. We have only to examine truth and duty. If they claim the admission of the validity of their baptism, we are obliged to refuse their claim, because truth does not allow it; and if they would not wish for communion with us on those terms, we must still advocate it because truth demands it. "Our conduct on such questions should not be governed by affection any more than by disaffection, but by a regard to the revealed will of Christ."

There are many pædo-baptists who love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ. They are his members, his servants, his soldiers, his friends. They maintain his authority, promote his cause, copy his example, obey his precepts, and live for his glory. They love him, and are therefore loved by him (John, xiv. 21),

and to each of them he will say at last, "Well done, good and faithful servant, . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," Matt. xxv. 23.

Why ought not Baptists to own them as brethren? All who are the servants of Christ ought to be owned as such. If he honours and loves them, it is not his will that their fellow-servants should dishonour them. God has made them his children by adoption and grace, and cannot be pleased to see that while they are owned by him, they are disowned by their brethren. It must be right to own the work of the Holy Spirit wherever it is accomplished; and to choose those for our friends whom he has chosen to be his temples, 1 Cor. vi. 19. It is according to nature and grace too, that the sheep of the same flock, under the same shepherd, should walk together and feed together in the same pastures, John, x. 16. Brothers ought to sit down together at their Father's table (John, i. 12; Gal. iv. 4, 5; Matt. xxiii. 8); servants in the same household ought to be in friendly association (Heb. iii. 6; Gal. vi. 10); and soldiers of the same army ought to be united, Eph. vi. 10–17; 1 Thess. v. 8.

What their circumstances dictate the word of God likewise enjoins. To all his disciples, without exception, Christ has said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another," John, xiii. 35. They must therefore so manifest their mutual affection by brotherly fellowship that all men may know it. Not for the apostles only, but for all believers, has Christ thus

prayed: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me," John, xvii. 20. Their union, therefore, must be so manifested by brotherly fellowship that the world may see it and be converted by it. Hence the apostle Paul, adverting to the differences of opinion which divided the Christians at Rome, wrote to them, and through them to all real Christians: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations," Rom. xiv. 1. If the Jewish Christian had not light enough to throw off the Jewish ordinances as abolished in Christ, he was not, therefore, to be repelled from communion with those who had more knowledge; nor should the strong dispute with him, except as he sought it and as just occasions were presented, respecting his peculiar views. If, likewise, the pædo-baptist has not light enough to throw off the Jewish ordinance of infant circumcision, but must revive it in infant-baptism, he is not to be repelled from communion with those to whom God has given more knowledge in this matter. "Receive ye one another," continued the Apostle, "as Christ also received us, to the glory of God," Rom. xv. 7. We are called to receive all Christ's disciples, notwithstanding their errors, as Christ has received us notwithstanding ours. If we must not openly acknowledge them because of some defects in knowledge, why should Christ accept us, notwith-

standing greater defects? The great ground of this open reception, this free brotherly intercourse, is stated by St. Paul in these words: "Let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth, *for God hath received him*," Rom. xiv. 3. In other words, let not the Baptist who cannot baptize infants condemn pious pædo-baptists who do baptize them, because their faithful profession and their holy life prove that God has received them: and those who are accepted by God as his beloved children are surely good enough to be welcomed by erring and sinful followers of Christ as beloved brethren.

All this is, indeed, granted by the advocates for strict communion.

"Elsewhere and in all other things," is their language, "we own as brethren and honour godly pædo-baptists, but we must not admit them to the table of the Lord." "If I have anything," says one of them, "like Christian love in me, I feel it toward all those in whom I perceive the image of Christ, whether they be Baptists or pædo-baptists, and my refusing to commune with them at the Lord's table is not because I consider them as improper subjects."—*A. Fuller.*

"We do receive our pædo-baptist brethren in the sense of the Apostle. . . . We work with them in the common cause of Christ, in prayer, in missionary, bible, and religious tract meetings; we pray for them, and esteem them highly in love for their work's sake; we rejoice in their spiritual prosperity, we preach for them and they for us; and we would

with great pleasure receive them to the table of the Lord, if we had authority from the sacred volume for so doing: but we conscientiously believe we have not."—*Primitive Church Magazine, June* 1849.

According to this doctrine, pædo-baptists are "brethren," yet must not sit down with their brothers at the table of their Elder Brother, Heb. ii. 11. As "brethren" they are Christ's disciples, and, therefore, commanded by him to eat and drink in memory of him (Matt. xxvi. 26); but they must not eat and drink with their fellow-servants. They are welcome guests to their Lord, but are repelled by their fellow-guests. Elsewhere they are owned to be brethren, but the chief sign of brotherhood must be withheld from them. They may lead the prayers of their fellow-Christians, and they may instruct the churches as enlightened and holy ministers of Christ; yet in that ordinance, which is specially appointed to be a sign of the communion of saints and the unity of the body (1 Cor. x. 17), they must be put out, as though they were not members. What a spectacle is thus afforded to the world, who see with contempt that the most earnest followers of the Redeemer cannot even commemorate his death together! When the saints of Jesus are thus put out of the communion of any of his churches, are not those who put them out treading in the steps of Diotrephes (3 John, 10), though with a different spirit?

No: it is replied, "We are willing to receive all who appear to have been received of God to the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. . . .

But we cannot divide the one from the other without dispensing with an institution of Christ." But this is no reception of them. They can no more force their convictions than you can; and therefore you say to them in effect, Unless you will forego what you believe to be a duty, the baptism of infants, and accept us as authoritative expositors of Christian doctrine, we must expel you from our society when we commemorate the dying love of our Lord, and meet as brethren in his name.

That there is "an instituted connection between baptism and the Lord's Supper," I freely admit; and it is no less clear, that after the institution of baptism by our Lord, no person who refused to be baptized was ever admitted in any Christian church to that Supper. But neither of these facts afford reason for the rejection of pædo-baptists, as such, from it. Baptism being the appointed rite by which believers then professed their repentance and faith, no one could then refuse it without wilfully disobeying the commands of Christ, and no wilfully disobedient person could be admitted to the communion of saints; but as the unbaptized person was then excluded from the Lord's Supper, so he was excluded from every other act which would mark him to be a Christian brother. He could not take the lead in their social prayers, he could not preach to the gathered church; he was not recognised as a minister of Christ; he was not owned even as a brother. These facts abundantly show the difference between his case and that of the godly pædo-baptist

now. While the one could neither preach nor pray in public, the other is invited by strict Baptist churches to do both. While the one was esteemed a disobedient unbeliever, the other is owned by them to be a godly minister of Christ. To reject the one from the table of the Lord was consistent, to reject the other appears to be grossly inconsistent. If the pædo-baptist be a disobedient unbeliever, reject him from the Lord's table, and also from every other function and privilege exclusively appropriate to believers; if he be an obedient believer, admit him to these functions, but with them admit him also to the Lord's table.

But how can the godly pædo-baptist be excluded on these terms? He is no more a disobedient unbeliever than the strictest of the Baptists who would exclude him. The reason why he is a pædo-baptist is, that he believes the baptism of infants to be according to the will of Christ. What person was ever excluded from the Lord's Supper in the apostolic churches for doing all that he believed, after searching of the scriptures and listening to apostles, to be according to the will of Christ? What upright and earnest believer was ever in those days excluded? What member of one church was refused communion with the members of another? In what apostolic church were ever such men as Baxter, Howe, and Flavel, Doddridge and Whitfield, Edwards and Payson, Fletcher, Martin, Brainerd, and Chalmers, men full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, walking with God and labouring for Christ, refused such com-

munion? It was reserved for worse days to see so strange a spectacle.

What if these good soldiers had not taken the oath of allegiance to their king in the exact manner in which Baptists take it, still it was taken. What if they had not put on their king's uniform just as Baptists put it on, yet they wore it. The Baptist has professed his allegiance to Christ at baptism, the pædo-baptist has professed it at the Lord's Supper. Both wear the king's uniform, but the one assumed it at the earlier rite, the other more irregularly at the later rite. If the one in baptism professed to die and rise with Christ, the other in the Supper "showed forth the Lord's death," 1 Cor. xi. 26.

"The scriptures," says Mr. Fuller, "lay great stress upon confessing Christ's name before men (Matt. x. 32), and baptism is one of the most distinguished ways of doing this. When a man becomes a believer in Christ, he confesses it usually in words to other believers; but the appointed way of confessing it openly to the world is by being baptized in his name. If, therefore, we profess Christianity only in words, the things professed may be genuine, but the profession is essentially defective."

Now, since confession is so necessary, and the pædo-baptist cannot confess him by baptism because he believes it to be wrong, but earnestly desires to confess him in the Lord's Supper, is it not inconsistent in those who insist so properly on the value

of confession to say to a Christian, Because you can not confess him in one way, we will hinder you from confessing him in another?

If, indeed, to admit him to the table were to dispense with the command of Christ, and to sanction the neglect of baptism, he must not be admitted; but this cannot be because he is admitted by the Churches who practise free communion, on the ground that he is a believer who keeps the commands of Christ, honours baptism, and believes that he has been baptized. I own that he is unbaptized but his case is totally different from the case of a person refusing to be baptized in the time of the Apostles: they knew that they were disregarding a divine command, he believes himself to be fulfilling it; they refused baptism because they despised the authority of Christ, he refuses it because he respects that authority. I do not adduce this consideration to show that the Church must receive all candidates for communion as qualified if they think themselves to be so, since the Church must be the ultimate judge of the qualifications of all who seek communion with it; but I adduce it to show that the pædobaptist is not disqualified. A loyal, loving, and obedient believer, who obeys the commands of Christ as far as he knows them, why should he be excluded? He is unbaptized, it is true; but his neglect of baptism is simply an error: and if a faithful, loving and obedient believer, who studies and follows the scripture, is to be excluded from communion for an error which does not touch the great doctrines of

the gospel, where is the exclusion to stop? Arminians and Calvinists must not hold communion together, nor Presbyterians, Anglicans, and Independents, nor Millenarians with Ante-millenarians, nor members of Establishments with members of free Churches, nor free-communion Baptists with those who advocate strict communion, nor any believer with any other whom he believes to be in error. No members of any Church can receive the Lord's Supper together. Churches must be scattered, and nothing remain but a sickening and noxious individuality, the Churches being reduced to a chaos of disconnected units.

Let it, further, be observed that the reasoning which could prove that unbaptized persons must not, under any circumstances, be admitted to the Lord's table must equally prove that they must not, under any circumstances, be owned as brethren. If you sanction their error by admitting them to the Lord's table, you must sanction it no less by all fraternization with them: and since we must never do evil that good may come, all persons, according to this doctrine, must exclude from their fellowship all whom they imagine to be in error; and, unless they be themselves infallible, must allow all their fellow-Christians equally to excommunicate them. Since this absurd conclusion follows from the doctrine that in admitting saints as such to the communion of saints we sanction their errors, it follows that this doctrine is false. Saints may be admitted to the table of their Lord without sanc-

tion of their errors; and pædo-baptists may come to it without any dishonour done to the sacrament of baptism.

There is another objection to open communion, which has been urged in the following terms:— "Thousands of persons who from their early days have been taught and do now believe that by being sprinkled they were made members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, might, but for this error, have been seeking salvation from a right quarter. . . . Can it be rooted up too soon? . . . Are our open-communion brethren going the right way to work to root it up, and not rather rooting baptism out of the Church?" When any doctrine is at once popular and false, an exclusive policy upholds it. Investigation would expose it, and must therefore be prevented; and as men do not like to be excluded from society, if that exclusion can be attached to a denial of the popular error, men will avoid investigation to escape the consequences of an inconvenient sincerity. But exclusiveness is extremely impolitic when a doctrine is unpopular and true. Nothing is more favourable to the progress of such a doctrine than investigation, and whatever promotes investigation extends the belief of the doctrine. Now the doctrine of believers' baptism, as opposed to infant-baptism, is exactly in these circumstances, and whatever promotes investigation will extend that doctrine. Which course, then, tends the most to encourage investigation, close communion or open? By the one, eminent Christians are

treated as heretics, disobedient to the law of Christ, and aliens from his Church; by the other, they are welcomed as brethren. The former must irritate and repel them; the latter cannot but attract their regard. By the exclusive system they are shut out from communion, not with the churches of Christ, which they might dread, but with a small minority of those churches, which they may be tempted to despise. By the one the advocates of the truth appear liberal and fraternal; by the other they repel their brethren, by seeming illiberal and unbrotherly. The one course would lead many to study their opinions, as those of enlightened and liberal persons; the other would induce many to reject them at once, as leading to a practice so unamiable, repulsive, and unwarrantable.

In another way this practice of close communion may still more powerfully obstruct the doctrine of believers' baptism. If I mistake not it must injure the spirit of the churches which practise it. How can they so separate from those with whom they are commanded to be openly one without serious loss? John, xvii. 20, 21. How can they so value the rite of baptism as to repel from their communion those who have the faith and devotedness which the rite expresses, and not suffer by it? At least, they must be much tempted to overvalue the form of religion, and to undervalue the reality; to "pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin," and to "omit the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith," Matt. xxiii. 23. This exclusion

of holy men seems a palpable disregard to the work of the Spirit in pædo-baptists, tempts Baptists to overvalue themselves on account of baptism, and if it impairs the spirituality of the Church must hinder the conversion of sinners. But let all consistent believers be admitted to communion, then irritation may subside, prejudice be diminished, the piety of the Baptist churches become attractive, the doctrines of baptism be examined candidly, and many may be converted to it.

There is, however, one more very serious objection to open communion, which ought to be fairly met. Let us hear Mr. Fuller: "The grand cause of the Church's having been corrupted, so as to become apostate, was its being mingled with the world. Pædo-baptism first occasioned this fatal mixture, and national establishments of religion completed it. The one introduced the unconverted posterity of believers, the other all the inhabitants of a country, considering none but pagans, Jews, and deists, as unbelievers. The one threw open the door, the other broke down the wall. It is manifestly thus that the Church and the world have been confounded, and will always be confounded, more or less, till pædo-baptism is no more. If you admit pædo-baptists to communion, you will not be able for any continuance to secure your own principle, that none but real Christians should be admitted." The reason assigned for this opinion is, that in pædo-baptist churches, baptized children are considered as members of the visible Church, and that

they are, therefore, admitted too easily to the Lord's table. But assuming the truth of this statement, at least with reference to Establishments, let us recollect that few inconsistent communicants from pædo-baptist churches would desire occasional communion with Baptist churches, nor could their presence injure these churches; and with respect to members, each church has the means of preventing the alleged evil in its own hands. For although it may not repel from its communion pædo-baptists as such, it has yet the right to ask from all who are candidates for communion credible proofs that they are true disciples. To be communicants in the Establishment ought to be no barrier to communion with any other church, but it is also no sufficient title to such communion. Each church may, if it will, require from candidates the profession of their faith and testimonials to their conduct. The profession thus required may be exactly that which would be made in baptism; and if the Church dread the appearance of sanctioning disobedience to a command of Christ, each pædo-baptist candidate may be required distinctly to profess that he refuses to be baptized only in obedience to what he believes, after examination, to be the will of Christ. The required discipline of the Church may thus be preserved, and all true believers be admitted to communion; but, on the other hand, to exclude from communion the best men in the country on the ground that they are unbaptized, must make both baptism and church discipline odious to multitudes.

For consider the real character of this exclusion. Those only are ordered in the word of God to be excluded who are heretical in doctrine (Gal. v. 12), who are vicious in their practice (1 Cor. v. 11, 13), who are schismatical in temper (Rom. xvi. 17), who injure their brethren (Matt. xviii. 17), or who are openly disobedient to the commands of Christ, 2 Thess. iii. 14. But you exclude, in company with all these, some of the most loyal, the most active, the bravest, and the most loving disciples of Christ. They may, like Enoch, walk with God; like Abraham, sacrifice all that is dearest to them to serve him; like Moses, trample under feet the world's most alluring bribes; like Paul, consecrate noble faculties with untiring ardour to the cause of their Redeemer; and yet, because they are pædo-baptists, you will exclude them from the table of their Lord. You do this because they will follow what they believe to be the will of Christ, the meaning of his command, and the practice of his Apostles: you do this because they do just what you do yourselves; since you will baptize believers alone, because you think that Christ requires it, and they will baptize infants because they think that he requires it. You do this, therefore, on a principle which would justify their exclusion of you; which proscribes all communion among believers, and would substitute submission to human authority for entire, unlimited submission to the authority of Christ. This cannot be right, a more brotherly course is demanded by the plain precepts

of scripture, by the clear proofs of faith and love in pædo-baptist brethren, by the duty of independent judgment inculcated on all, Rom. xiv. 5, 23. And to admit the saints of Christ as such to his table, to demand no other terms of communion than such as are terms of salvation, to welcome as brethren all whose doctrine and conduct prove them to be so, and to invite all evangelical churches to this manifested unity, is at once to extend the true doctrine of baptism, and to promote the progress of Christ's kingdom in the world.

CONCLUSION.

A FORM OF BAPTISMAL SELF-DEDICATION TO GOD.

O Lord God Almighty, I accept with humble gratitude, as a sinner who has deserved eternal death, and who cannot cease to deserve it, the rich, free, and eternal salvation, which thou in thy goodness hast provided for me.

I look to thee, O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to save me from the punishment of sin and its power; from the curse which thy law has justly pronounced upon me, from my own faults, from all temptation, and to bring me to a life of holy bliss in heaven, because thou hast promised all this to those who come to thee, as I now do, through Christ. In dependence upon the merit of thy Son, Jesus Christ, upon the aid of thy Spirit, and on thy truth, I look to thee for the eternal salvation of my body and of my soul, and I humbly accept thee as my chief good to all eternity.

O God the Son, my Redeemer, who didst expiate my sins by thy death, thou wast made sin for

me, that I might be made the righteousness of God in thee; thou hast redeemed me from the curse of the law, being made a curse for me; and having rescued me from eternal death by thy death, thou dost now live to bring me to eternal life. Believing in thy power and love, I trust to thy merit and intercession to secure for me the favour of God, to impart to me thy Holy Spirit, to enrich me with all the blessings of the new covenant, and to prepare me for heaven. Thus I accept thee as my only and all-sufficient Saviour.

Through Christ I likewise thankfully receive thee, O God the Spirit, to be my Sanctifier. For his sake thou dost dwell with those who believe on him, and believing on him, I look to thee to teach me all needful truth, to incline my heart to what is just and right, to set my affections on God and on spiritual things, to direct and control my will, to form my character, to sanctify me wholly, to preserve me through all temptations, and to bring me into the presence of my Redeemer in glory.

Thus I heartily accept thee, O God the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, as "my shield and my exceeding great reward." And I humbly trust, according to thy promises, to be made happy by thee for both worlds.

On the other hand, being so blessed and favoured, I, as a redeemed and pardoned transgressor, desire to make a public profession of faith in thee, and publicly to dedicate myself to thy service, according to Christ's appointment, by immersion. Before which

public act, I do now, therefore, first dedicate myself to thee in secret.

First, I renounce all sin for ever. By my sins I have displeased and dishonoured thee. They have checked my efforts to improve my character, they have hindered me from doing good, they have injured my peace and usefulness; they have been my disgrace, and but for thy mercy they would have been my ruin. I have been unreasonable, corrupt, and ungrateful in disobeying thee; and am brought by nature and by practice to such a condition, that nothing but the blood of Jesus Christ can blot out my guilt. Thou hast so hated sin, that thou hast sentenced sinners to eternal death; and unless Jesus Christ had suffered for it they could not have been saved. It is unnatural, depraved, and rebellious, exposing them to thy just wrath and curse. It has occasioned the death of Christ; it has made the world hate him; it opposes his dominion; he came to rescue us from its power; and he feels an irreconcilable hatred to it. It is contrary to the nature and the influence of the Holy Spirit; by whom it is progressively destroyed in each believer, and by whom it must ultimately be destroyed throughout the world. It is worse in thy children than in others, because they must sin against clearer light, and repeated promises, after experiencing the aids of grace, and after tasting the pleasure of obedience. I, therefore, desire to forsake it for ever; and henceforth to do, say, and think nothing which is contrary to thy will. As Christ died for my sins, and was

buried in the grave, so shall I be buried in the water in token that I die with him to the sins which caused his death, that I may never again serve sin.

At the same time, I mean by thy help to lead a new life. As Christ rose from the grave, so shall I rise from the water to a nobler and better life than before. Thou didst not give my faculties to be wasted in aimless inactivity; but rescued from active corruption to be employed in all that is useful and ennobling. Henceforth my opinions and judgment of things being formed by a supreme regard to thy will, I desire to cherish every right principle; to pursue every honourable and useful end; to do what is just and true, what is humane and benevolent; to set my affections on all that is the most worthy to engage them; to love all that are good; to seek holiness and heaven; to live for eternity and for thee; to be directed in all things by thy word; to be conformed to the example of Christ; and to aim at being perfect, as my Father in heaven is perfect. As Christ my Redeemer is in heaven, I will set my affections there; as he is holy, just, and good there, I will endeavour to be so here; as he glorifies thee there, I will seek to glorify thee here; as he loves believers, I will love them; and as he is head over all things to the Church, I will live to serve the Church. Thus, by thy help, I will rise with Christ to a new life.

Further, as I am about to be baptized unto the name of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, that is, to profess by immersion that I am thy worshipper

and servant, I now consecrate myself to thy service for ever.

I give myself unreservedly to thee, O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, relying on thy mercy to accept me through Christ, and on the aid of thy Spirit to enable me to adhere to my resolution. Thy will, O God, shall be mine. I mean to please thee in all things. I count thy enemies my enemies, thy friends my friends. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Only make me know thy will; and by thy help I will do it. Thou art my owner, and to please and serve thee shall be my highest end.

I give myself also unreservedly to thee, my gracious and loving Saviour, who art one in nature, design, and feeling with thy Father. As thou hast lived and died for me, I wish to live for thee; and as thou wilt give me glory in heaven, I desire to give thee glory on earth. Before long I hope to see thee in thy kingdom; meanwhile may I love, serve, trust, and delight in thee as my ever-present Redeemer. To obey thy commands, to copy thy example, to promote thy cause, to help thy servants, to honour thee in the use of all my faculties, possessions, and time, — all this is my fixed intention, by the aid of thy Spirit. Thou hast bought me by thy blood: I am thine.

Further, I give myself to thee, O Holy Spirit of God. It is my desire and purpose to be led by thy teaching, and to be conformed to thy will. May thy holy influence surround me wherever I may be.

May I never grieve thee by neglect or sin, by hardness or unbelief; but may I be immersed in a flood of light and love, as the three disciples were immersed in the bright cloud on the mount of transfiguration. May I be baptized in thee; pervade all my faculties, consecrate my whole being to thyself.

Since I have thus been enabled to believe, O Lord God, and am about to profess my faith by immersion unto thy name, I look to thee to fulfil the promises which thou hast made to me in thy word. Jesus, when on earth, said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Receive me, therefore, now, and own me at the last day as one of thy pardoned and accepted children. Thy apostle once said to an anxious multitude, "Repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Repenting of all my sins, and being about to be baptized in token of that repentance, may I have the assurance that my sins are remitted, and be sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. To the end my righteousness will be like filthy rags, and each day I must need thy forgiveness. Now therefore I desire, by being baptized in the name of Christ, to express my entire dependence on his merit and mediation, to assume by faith the robe of his righteousness, and to be one of those of whom the Apostle Paul has said, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ Jesus have put on Christ." Look on me as one who depends on him alone, let his righteousness be imputed to me, and let it hide from thee all my guilt.

Thus engaged in thy ennobling service, with a happy assurance that I am thy adopted child, may I have that joy and peace in believing which, in the case of others, has followed an open confession of Christ. As on the day of Pentecost the three thousand who were baptized were filled with gladness, as the jailer and his family rejoiced, believing in thee on the night of their baptism, and as the Ethiopian treasurer after receiving baptism went on his way rejoicing, so may I, in thus putting on the uniform of Christ as his soldier, experience such joy and peace in believing as all the trials of life shall not be able to destroy.

In this profession may I, through thy grace, be stedfast to the end of my life, and daily grow stronger in faith as nature decays.

As I am about to be received into the communion of saints as the member of a Christian Church, assist me to live answerably to this privilege. Make me to love my brethren, and to be loved by them in return. Never may I sow discord among those whom divine grace has united, but, on the contrary, be a peacemaker among those whom human infirmity separates. Never may I envy the gifts and graces of my companions, but feel humble gratitude to thee for every manifestation of thy goodness to them or to myself. Make me according to my ability to promote the happiness of the Church of which I shall form a part, cheerfully sharing in every evangelical labour, contributing to every work of benevolence, and uniting my prayers with the prayers of thy

Church for a copious effusion of thy Spirit upon us all.

Finally, may the memory of this solemn baptism refresh me during all my future course. If ever I am tempted to backslide, may these solemn vows occasion deep contrition, and recall me to fidelity; and whenever I reflect that I have thus heartily consecrated myself to thy service, may I feel disposed to renew this act of consecration with more entire devotedness and with more triumphant faith.

Now unto thee who art able to keep me from falling, and to present me faultless before the presence of thy glory with exceeding joy, to thee, the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

THE END.

London:—Printed by G. Barclay, Castle St. Leicester Sq.

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